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PRISON LIFE IN THE OLD CAPITOL

BY

JAMES J. WILLIAMSON

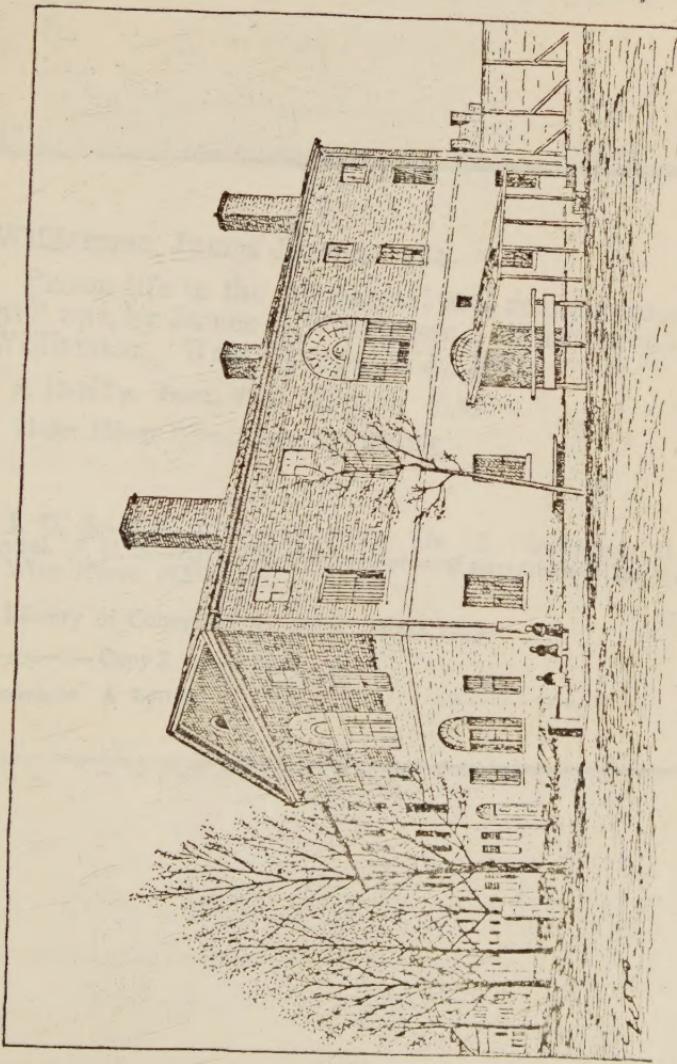
Author of "Mosby's Rangers"

Illustrations by

B. F. WILLIAMSON

WEST ORANGE, N. J.

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OLD CAPITOL PRISON, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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Williamson, James Joseph, 1834

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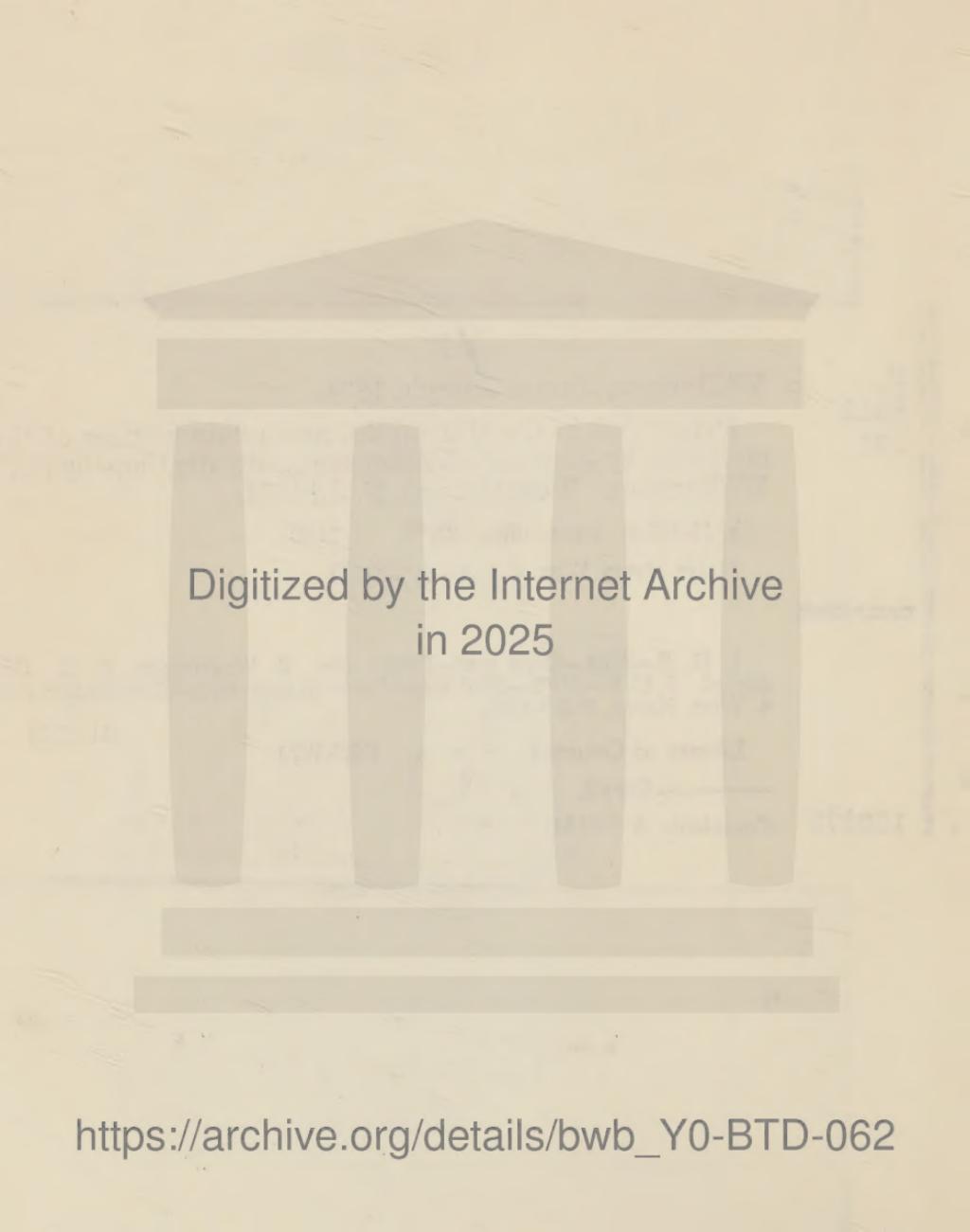
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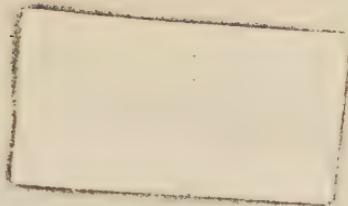
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BY

JAMES J. WILLIAMSON

188575

P R E F A C E

It is not my intention in my prison diary to discuss the constitutional or legal question of arbitrary arrests and imprisonment of non-combatants, but to present to my readers a picture of the daily routine of prison life as I saw it, together with incidents related to me by fellow-prisoners.

Conditions in the Old Capitol differed in many respects from the prison camps. Prisoners in the Old Capitol were mostly civilians, except where soldiers (either prisoners of war or men charged with offenses), were brought in and kept until they could be sent to places designated; or prisoners from other prisons held over until they could be shipped South for exchange.

In the itinerary of our journey from Parole Camp to Upperville I have given little details which to some may seem trivial and unworthy of note, but I give them to show existing conditions in sections of the Confederacy through which we passed.

I do not feel that I am straying from the subject of this narrative of prison experience in appending some facts concerning the treatment of prisoners of war. It is only by laying before the people a frank and faithful statement that we can overcome prejudice and hostile feeling, and bring about that hearty reunion which is earnestly desired by all who have the peace and prosperity of the country at heart.

I have before me a report of a sermon from the *New York Press*, May, 1909, in which a minister of the Gospel (?) residing within the limits of Greater New York speaks of "*the infamous Captain Wirz*"—"a

murderer." It is charitable to attribute such language from the lips of a minister to ignorance rather than malice. Yet, while persons are found who entertain and publicly express such sentiments, I cannot be open to the charge of desiring to awaken and perpetuate bitter memories if I seek to place on record the true history of Major Wirz, to refute the falsehoods and misrepresentations which have crept into history and are still believed by some.

When the grave questions which for years agitated our country had reached the crisis, and there remained but the *ultima ratio regum*, they were submitted to the arbitrament of the battlefield. We of the South accepted the result of that contest and laid down our arms in good faith. But when we are asked, like a whipped child, to say we were wrong and are sorry for what we did, and promise to sin no more, it is asking too much. We fought for what we considered our rights, and lost. Yet our men, who fought and lost, and those who died in the struggle, were just as brave and as honest as the men who wore the blue. *They* fought for the Union, *we* fought for our homes, for our wives and our dear ones. For those of our dead who were consigned to death and ignominy we do not ask pity, but only for that justice which was denied them in life—that the blot upon their reputations be effaced and their names stand out clear and stainless.

The little episode in relation to the Fairfax Court House raid will need no apology for its introduction, as I have already had occasion to refer to that affair in my diary.

The illustrations here given are from drawings made by my son, B. F. Williamson.

JAMES J. WILLIAMSON.

West Orange N. J., April, 1911.

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INTRODUCTORY

Prison life was much the same North or South in its general features, having its discomforts and privations, its days of worry, its longings and its disappointments, combined with that chafing under restraint, which is a feeling common to all men. Yet the sufferings of prisoners could have been alleviated in the North to a greater degree than was possible at the South, where in most cases the distress was due to lack of means to relieve it. The Confederate Government could not do for Federal prisoners what it was unable to do for its own soldiers or people.

It is not strange that when the flood of war swept over the country I should plunge into its turbulent waters and be carried along with the current. This martial spirit was inherited and fostered from the cradle up. My grandmother came to this country from Ireland in the stormy days of the rebellion of 1798. When but a little child I would sit by her side for hours, drinking in, like a heated, thirsty traveler, the wild stories of the exciting scenes she had witnessed there, and listening to the pathetic recital of the wrongs of her loved country and its people. And at night I would drop off to sleep on her lap with the old Irish rebel songs of '98 murmuring a lullaby in my baby ears.

It was only natural, too, that I should be enlisted on the Southern side. I was born in Baltimore, and it was there I passed the early years of my life. My father, James J. Williamson, had the distinction of

designing and building the first clipper ship ever constructed—the clipper ship *Ann McKim*, built in Baltimore in 1832, for the old house of Isaac McKim, of Baltimore. The history of Maryland, with the record of the heroic deeds of the Old Maryland Line in the War of the Revolution, had always possessed a charm for me above all other books. It was my greatest pride to know that I was a Marylander and that Baltimore was my home.

When I became of age I went to Washington and obtained a position in the Government Printing Office, where I remained until the breaking out of the war.

In the spring of 1861, the Federal troops were ordered to march on Washington. When the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment was attacked while passing through Baltimore, I was ill, in bed and under the doctor's care. The next day my mother brought into my room the morning paper and read to me an account of the fighting in Baltimore, and of the threats made to invade my native State and bombard and destroy Baltimore. I felt all the youthful fire within me blazing with fury. The warm blood coursing in my veins carried with it a force which seemed to give an almost unnatural strength to my feeble body, weakened by a painful illness. I was seized with a desire to rush at once to the scene of action. I felt that the bed was no place for me—that I must rouse myself to meet the issue—that my dear old mother State was calling for her sons, and I would not let that call go unheeded, but must hasten on to help guard that sacred soil upon which I had received my being and in which reposed the ashes of those who were most near and dear to me. I felt all that enthu-

siasm with which the Southern hearts were filled when their States were invaded and their cities and their homes laid waste. Old Maryland was invaded—I did not care by whom—for whoever came with hostile intent was an enemy, and her enemies were mine.

I said:

“I am going to Baltimore.”

“When?” asked my mother.

“I will start to-morrow morning.” My mother left the room without reply to what she thought were idle words.

When the doctor came for his morning visit, my mother said:

“What do you think this boy says? He says he is going to Baltimore.”

“Let him go,” said the doctor, with an incredulous smile.

The next morning when he came, expecting to find me in bed, my mother said: “Well, Doctor, he has gone to Baltimore.”

The doctor shook his head, and replied, “It will either kill or cure him.” And it cured him. The day I left my bed I went to Baltimore, and a week after that I was in Richmond.

When I reached Baltimore trains were running to and from the city without interruption, but troops were being rushed to Washington, and it was seen that Baltimore would soon be surrounded and hemmed in by Federal troops, and it would then be difficult to leave the city, so I left for Harper's Ferry, where I understood a body of Confederate troops were already in camp. From Harper's Ferry I went, via Strasburg, to Manassas. There I found a few regi-

ments of Confederates assembled. From Manassas I started on train for Richmond.

Between Culpeper and Orange Court House we unfortunately came in collision with a train carrying infantry and a battery of artillery to Manassas. Both trains were on the same track and coming from opposite directions. There was a head-on collision; the two engines crashed into each other and the cars telescoped. There were fourteen killed outright and a great number wounded, many fatally.

I was sitting in the rear car, talking to a man who stood holding on to the rear door of the car. When I felt the shock I saw him shoot past me and down the aisle, between the seats. That night, when I arrived at Gordonsville, I went to a house, seeking lodgings for the night, and to my surprise, when the door was opened and the gentleman of the house stood before me, although his head was bandaged and his arm in a sling, I recognized in him the man I was conversing with at the time of the accident.

In Richmond I found a number of acquaintances from Baltimore. A great many young men were coming in from Maryland, some of whom had been comrades in military companies in Baltimore, and soon a couple of companies were organized to be united to a regiment then forming at Harper's Ferry, which afterward gained honorable distinction as the First Maryland Regiment.

Richmond had already put on a military air. In the throngs on the streets a major part of the male population appeared in stylish uniforms. These were the gay days in Richmond.

Troops were arriving from the South and West,

passing through on their way to the seat of war. I was particularly struck with the appearance of the Louisiana troops in their holiday dress, marching proudly along, with bands playing inspiring martial airs; the drum-major leading off with stately tread, waving his staff. Tripping gaily after came the sprightly vivandieres, their dainty little caps tipped saucily to one side, their shapely ankles peeping from beneath the folds of their short skirts, and the little keg at their side hanging by a fancy cord thrown over the shoulder.

At the outbreak of the war the men came out as they had been accustomed to "play soldiers"—attired in gaudy uniforms, with gay colors, bright, shining gun barrels and flashing bayonets. The Zouaves with their red breeches, their red caps or turbans, their gilt braids and chevrons.

These soon gave way to less showy trappings. The jaunty caps were exchanged for the Kossuth felt hat, the showy jackets, with their rich gilt braid and trimmings, were replaced by the unpretentious blouse, and the flaming red breeches were now conspicuous by their absence, and in their stead comfortable, though less attractive, garments were worn.

The bright gun barrels and flashing bayonets even were found to be no more efficient than those dulled by age and use, whose somber hue did not present such a shining mark for a watchful sharpshooter.

In the house where I had taken board there was a gentleman who was employed in the printing office doing the work of the State and Confederate Governments. Learning that I had been in the Government Printing Office in Washington, he said they would be

glad to have me at this office. I told him I expected to join my friends from Baltimore; that we were anxious to be together in the Confederate army. He said, "You can be of service on this work just now, and we are badly in want of help." I accordingly went to Ritchie & Dunnivant's, the parties having charge of this work.

Soon after this my wife ran the blockade and joined me in Richmond.

After a time, owing to the strict blockade, the fight-

Richmond, Va., March 1st, 1862.

The Bearer *Jas Williamson*, being employed by us on
Confederate Government work, as certified to the Governor of Virginia by the Superintendent
of Public Printing, has been exempted from military duty, by order of the Governor of this
date. See list of Exemptions filed in the Adjutant General's Office.

By order of the Secretary of War
Geo. W. Nelson
Asst. Public Printer
A.C.S.D.

CERTIFICATE OF EXEMPTION

These were furnished to save annoyance from provost-guards or
Conscript officers

ing around Richmond, and the scarcity of the necessities of life, the sufferings of the people were becoming more serious every day. I felt that while it was a matter of love and duty on my part to endure these hardships without murmuring, and to contribute all my efforts to the attainment of the success of our cause, still I had no right to impose upon others an amount of distress which they were not called upon to undergo, and which could in no wise aid in the

accomplishment of that object, but was simply adding to the number of non-combatants who were consuming the scanty store of supplies without contributing to their increase.

Taking this view of the situation, I decided to run the blockade, and after getting my wife and children safely outside of the lines, where they would be properly cared for and have those comforts which I could not obtain for them in Richmond, I could then take chances for my return to the scene of duty.

I procured a pass for myself, wife and children

Confederate States of America,

WAR DEPARTMENT,

Richmond,

Dec 1st 9th 1862.

Permission is granted Henry Williamson wife & the Children to visit Hanover Junction upon honor and to communicate in writing or verbally, for publication, any fact ascertained, which, if known to the enemy, might be injurious to the Confederate States of America.
(Subject to the discretion of the military authorities.)

E. Greenwald
PROVOST MARSHAL.

PASS THROUGH CONFEDERATE LINES

through the Confederate lines, and, traveling in the most primitive fashion, striking out from Hanover Junction, crossed the Rappahannock River, and reached Westmoreland Court House one summer evening, in an ox-cart. We waited at the Potomac River for a favorable opportunity to cross without too great risk of capture by one of the United States gunboats patrolling the river, and then crossed in an open boat to Stone's Landing, on the Maryland side. Here we were very comfortable, with a nice breakfast of fish

and oysters fresh from the water, until the steamboat came along which was to take us to Washington. There were a number of Union officers and soldiers on the boat, but having my wife and little children with me I suppose averted whatever suspicion they might otherwise have entertained, and we reached Washington without any mishap.

PRISON LIFE IN THE OLD CAPITOL

On the evening of Saturday, January 31, 1863, between seven and eight o'clock, an officer in full uniform, but unarmed, came into a bookstore on Seventh Street, Washington, D. C., where I was then engaged, and asked for the proprietor, Mr. Russell. I pointed out Russell. The officer then asked him if he knew a Mr. Williamson. Russell answered, "Yes."

"Is he a printer?" asked the officer.

"Yes."

"Is he the only one of that name that you know?"

"Yes."

"Where is he?"

"There he is," answered Russell, pointing toward me.

The officer walked over to me and said:

"Sir, you will have to come along with me."

"All right," said I.

He then went to the door and called in a soldier he had left standing guard outside, and said:

"Take charge of that man."

I asked the officer if I would be permitted to call at my home in order to acquaint my family with the cause of my absence. He said I would not; that I must go to the Provost-Marshal's office. I obtained permission to send a note to my wife, stating that I was under arrest. Putting on my hat and coat, I was marched to the corner of Eighth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. Here we halted, and the officer called out to another soldier, who stood there holding his sword,

which he took from the man and buckled on. Placing me between the two guards, we all marched up Pennsylvania Avenue to the Provost-Marshal's office. The Marshal was not in, but his assistant said:

“Do you belong in Washington?”

“I do,” said I.

“Haven’t you been South lately?”

“Yes,” I said; “I came from Richmond on the third of last August.”

“Have you reported yourself to the military authorities?”

“I have not.”

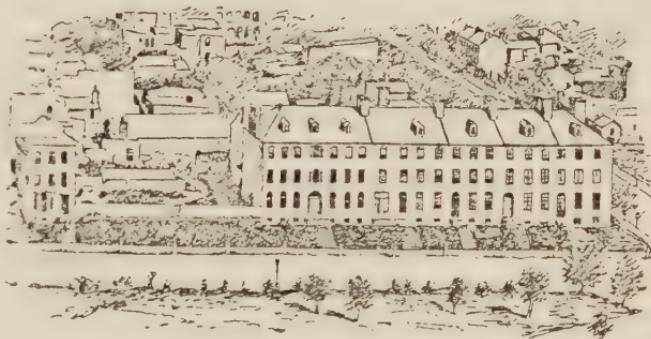
He next asked me if I would take the oath of allegiance to the Government. I told him I would not; that I could not think of doing so. He said I would have time enough to think about it, as it might be necessary to do so before I could obtain my release. That I was charged with having been in Richmond, and also with being accessory to the imprisonment of some Union citizens.

I again asked if I would be permitted to go home under escort of a guard, so as to acquaint my family with the cause of my absence and also to get a change of clothing and some few articles necessary for me during the time I might be kept under arrest. This request was denied, and I was marched off under guard to the Old Capitol Prison, at the corner of First and A Streets.

The building known as the Old Capitol had a memorable history. Built in 1800, it was originally designed for a tavern or boarding-house, but owing to bad management it proved a failure and was closed shortly before the War of 1812.

In August, 1814, when the British troops under General Ross entered Washington, they burned the Capitol and other public buildings, and the Government bought this old tavern or boarding-house, in which Congress should hold their sessions and public business be transacted until the Capitol could be rebuilt.

The interior of the building was completely renovated and reconstructed, and here both Houses sat for a number of years. Within its walls two Presidents were inaugurated, and here some of our most dis-



CARROLL PRISON (DUFF GREEN'S ROW)

tinguished statesmen began their careers. It was in this building the Hon. John C. Calhoun died.

When it was abandoned by Congress upon the completion of the Capitol, it was called the "Old Capitol," as a distinctive title. After that it underwent a number of changes as boarding-house, school, etc., until, in 1861, it was taken by the Washington authorities to be used as a prison.

A row of houses on the adjoining block, known as Duff Green's Row, was afterward taken and used

as an annex to the Old Capitol, and for the same purpose. It was called the "Carroll Prison."

On arriving at the Old Capitol, we were halted at the entrance by the sentry patrolling the pavement in front of the prison door, who called out with a loud voice, "Corporal of the guard; Post No. 1." This brought out the corporal, with his musket at his shoulder, and he escorted us inside.

Entering the prison from First Street, we passed through a broad hallway, which was used as a guard room, and thence into a room where prisoners were first taken to be questioned and searched. I found the lieutenant in charge more courteous than any of those in whose custody I had been. After receiving my commitment from the guard who brought me from the Provost-Marshal's office, he inquired if I had any arms or other prohibited goods in my possession. I replied that the only article I had which might come within the forbidden class was a small pocket-knife, which I took from my pocket and handed him. He smiled as he gave it back, and made no further search. He asked me if I had been to supper, and receiving a negative reply, led me to a dirty, dismal room, which I afterward learned was the mess-room. Here, grouped around a big stove was a gang of negroes, one of whom, at the lieutenant's command, brought out a chunk of beef, a slice of bread over an inch thick, and a cup of coffee (?), sweetened, but without milk. This was set out on a table, of what material constructed it was impossible to determine on account of the accumulation of dirt. The meat was served in a tin plate which looked as though it might have been through the Peninsular campaign.

Though I failed, no doubt, to do full justice to the repast set before me by the good-natured lieutenant, I certainly appreciated his good intentions and his honest efforts to entertain me with the best at his command.

The lieutenant sat and talked with me for some time before taking me to my room. He asked me if I would take the oath of allegiance to the Government. I told him I would not. He asked if I would be willing to take an oath to support the Constitution of the United States. "Yes," said I, "but not an oath to support the Government or Administration." He asked if I were living in a Northern city and came to Washington and went into business, would I in that case take the oath. I told him I would not. I said, "If I were in the South, even, and that iron-clad oath" (as it was called) "was offered to me, I would not take it."*

THE OATH *

*District of Columbia, }
County of Washington }*

I, of do solemnly swear on the Holy Evangelist of Almighty God, without any mental reservation, that I will at any and all times hereafter, and under all circumstances, yield a hearty and willing support to the Constitution of the United States and to the Government thereof; that I will not, either directly or indirectly, take up arms against said Government, nor aid those now in arms against it; that I will not pass without the lines now established by the Army of the United States, or hereafter from time to time to be established by said Army, nor hold any correspondence whatever with any person or persons beyond said lines so established by said Army of the United States during the present rebellion, without permission from the Secretary of War; also, that I will do no act hostile or injurious to the Union of the States; that I will give no aid, comfort or assist-

He then accompanied me upstairs to Room No. 16, and here, after the door was unlocked, I was ushered into my future quarters. I was welcomed and introduced by one of my fellow-prisoners to the others of the party, some of whom had been brought in that same day.

Room No. 16 was a spacious room, with one very



WINDOW IN ROOM 16

large arch window opposite the door from which the room was entered. This window was directly over the main entrance to the building on First Street, and in by-gone days it lighted up the former Senate Chamber. In the middle of the room a huge cylinder stove formed the centerpiece, while around and against the

ance to the enemies of the Government, either domestic or foreign; that I will defend the flag of the United States and the armies fighting under it from insult and injury, if in my power so to do; and that I will in all things deport myself as a good and loyal citizen.

Subscribed and sworn to before me, this day of

walls were twenty-one bunks or berths, arranged in three tiers, one above the other. There were a couple of pine tables, each about five feet long, with a miscellaneous collection of chairs, benches and home-made apologies for seats.

When the building was used as the Capitol, this floor contained the Senate and House of Representatives, but after its abandonment by Congress the floor was cut up into five rooms, now numbered from 14 to 18—No. 16 being the largest. The doors of all opened into a large hall, from which a broad stairway led to the floor below.

After spending a couple of hours in swapping stories and getting better acquainted, the whole party adjourned to their up-and-downy beds.

Sunday, February 1, 1863.—My first night in my new quarters was a very uncomfortable one. An old blanket spread over the hard boards, with a piece of wood morticed in at the head for a pillow, was the bed on which I was expected to sleep. All night the steady tramp of the sentry up and down the hall outside of our room door, with the clanking of arms, the challenging of the guards and the calls of the relief through the night, kept me awake, until at last tired nature gave way and the god of sleep closed my weary eyes. How long I slept I know not, but when I woke it was as if awaking from a troubled dream. I looked around at my surroundings and then lay down again on my bunk, pondering on the events of the past night. After a while I got up and took a wash. There was but little time required for dressing. Soon the door was thrown open and there was a call to breakfast. Being totally unacquainted with the daily routine, I

mechanically followed the crowd, without knowing where it would lead me. It led me to the mess-room. It might have led me to a worse place, but it would have been difficult to find.

It was a long, dirty, gloomy-looking room, with nothing in its appearance to tempt the appetite, and the food looked as though served at second-hand. The odor which assailed the nostrils seemed as if coming from an ancient garbage heap. The waiter stood at the head of the long board table, with a handful of tin cups filled with a liquid by courtesy called coffee. He would, with a dextrous twist of the wrist, send them spinning along down the table, leaving each man to catch one of the flying cups before it slid past. Fortunately, the waiter had by practice acquired sufficient skill to enable him to shoot a cup in your direction without spilling more than one-half of its contents. With this was served a chunk of beef and a slice of bread. The beef was left untouched by those who had the privilege and the means of providing their own food, but the bread was good, and a generous slice. I saw my companions slipping their quota of bread under the breasts of their coats, and I did the same.

After a half-hour's recreation in the prison yard, we went back to our rooms and were locked in. In our room a table was spread and we had breakfast of ham, sausage, bread, butter and tea.

Room No. 16 faces the east front of the Capitol, and by standing or sitting back a short distance from the window we can look out and see the passers-by. No persons, however, are allowed to show any signs of recognition. If a person is seen loitering in passing the prison, or walking at a pace not considered

satisfactory by the guard, he soon receives a peremptory command to "pass on," or, "Hurry up, there," and if this warning is not heeded the offending person, whether male or female, is arrested and detained.

This morning, two gentlemen walking down on the opposite side of the street, looked across and smiled. One of my room-mates raised his hat and bowed. One of the gentlemen did the same. Immediately we heard the sentry under the window call out: "Corporal of the guard, Post No. 1," and an officer coming out, the person was pointed out, with the remark, "That man bowed over here." A guard was instantly dispatched after him, and he was brought over, but was released in a short time.

Dinner to-day consisted of boiled beans and rusty-looking fat pork, with molasses (the molasses thin as water), served up in a dirty tin plate. There being neither knife, fork nor spoon given out with it, the only way the mixture could be eaten was by dipping it up with the bread and thus conveying it to the mouth.

When we went back to our room we prepared dinner from our own supply of provisions.

This afternoon three young ladies passing the prison looked over very pleasantly at the prisoners, who were in sight at the window, much to the displeasure of the guard, who stopped his walk and stood watching them. Finally, one of them smiled and nodded her head. At this moment came the call—"Corporal of the guard, Post No. 1." The young ladies had by this time reached the corner of the street. Turning around and seeing the soldier coming after them, they waved their handkerchiefs and ran down the street.

The sentry, after picking his way through the mud across the street, turned back and gave up the chase.

For supper we had a piece of bread, without butter, and a cup of coffee (?), without milk.

The bill of fare here given for the three meals of this day would serve, with but little variation, for the entire time of my detention.

One of the prisoners, a Confederate soldier, whom I met in the yard to-day, told me that he was just recovering from a fever, and although he had an excellent appetite, his stomach was weak and he could not eat the food set before him; that as he had no money to purchase anything else, he was compelled to go hungry.

With the exception of the bread, which is good (thanks to Superintendent Wood), the food dealt out here is poor in quality and insufficient in quantity. I noticed some of the boxes were marked "White House," from which I inferred the contents were condemned army stores.

Those who can afford to do so club together and, having obtained permission, purchase such articles as the sutler will procure for them. The goods kept in stock by this dignitary are neither very choice nor varied, chiefly tobacco, cigars, cakes, candy, pies, etc. For our mess in Room 16, we select one man as treasurer, and he purchases our supplies, such as coffee, tea, sugar, cheese, and he occasionally has a large ham boiled. All of these articles the sutler furnishes at prices far beyond their market value; but we are glad to get them, and compelled from necessity to submit to the extortion.

Prisoners having money or friends outside of the

prison can obtain many necessities and enjoy comforts which are denied those less fortunate. A friend (Mrs. Ennis), living near the prison, sends dinner in to me every day. There is always enough to feed three or four abundantly, and none of it is ever wasted.

We take turns in the household work—cooking and cleaning up—two men being detailed for this duty each day. It is unnecessary to say our cooking arrangements are very simple.

In our room there are two, one, I think, a Yankee deserter, known as "Dutchy" and "Slim Jim," who are unable to contribute their quota to the commissary fund, but as they can make a pot of coffee or tea, and wield a broom or wash a dirty dish, they are always ready to make up their deficit by taking the place of room-mates afflicted with hook-worm or victims of inertia.

Having our meals in our own room, we can take the whole half-hour allowed at meal time for recreation in the prison yard, which gives us an opportunity to mingle with prisoners from other rooms than our own. This meeting of old friends and comrades, and the making of new acquaintances, is a source of great pleasure to us and a relief from the monotony of what would otherwise be the dull routine of prison life.

Monday, Feb. 2.—To-night two men were brought into our room. They say they were employed in General Halleck's office, and are confined here for absenting themselves without leave. They are looked upon with suspicion by our party, who fear they may be spies.

Persons are often put in the rooms with prisoners, who, while posing as prisoners themselves, are really

spies or detectives in the employ of the officials. They associate with the prisoners in their rooms, and also in the yard during the time allowed for recreation, and by assuming an air of injured innocence as victims of oppression, seek to gain their confidence with the intention of betraying them. If they can succeed in overcoming their suspicions and induce the prisoners to speak freely, these detectives report the conversations to their employers.

Wednesday, Feb. 4.—Superintendent Wood said last night that he would allow the party in Room 16 (as they were not satisfied with the prison fare), if they preferred it, to receive the money in lieu of rations, and supply themselves. This was agreed to.

Mr. James Fullerton came to see me to-day. An official seated himself directly in front of us during the interview, and when Mr. Fullerton proceeded to ask me if I had any idea as to the person who had me arrested, the official interrupted him, saying he would be allowed to speak only of family affairs. Mr. Fullerton said he only wished to find out something of the nature of the charges against me, in order to furnish rebutting testimony. He was twice interrupted while attempting to ask me questions.

I had written a note to my wife, asking her to send me a change of clothing and some articles necessary here, for even with frequent changes it is difficult to keep free from vermin. To-day I asked Mr. Drew, the clerk, if it had been sent. He said, "Why, you have sent her all the word you wanted to send." I said, "I have sent nothing but the note which you still retain." "Oh, then," said he, "I will send that. I thought you had written before." Had I not called

his attention to this note it would not have been delivered.

This was the first and last letter I sent out during my term of imprisonment, as I found all letters had to go first to the Provost-Marshal's office for inspection, and then it was doubtful when they would reach their destination, if at all. A young man named Hurst wrote a letter to his father, who was residing in Washington City, and nine days passed before it was delivered.

A young man named Moore died to-night in one of the adjoining rooms. He was arrested without any specific charge. Though he was very ill at the time, he was marched eight miles. This proved too great a strain for him, and he died soon after his arrival here. His poor old mother was with him at the time of his death. Knowing his condition, and fearing he would not survive the effects of the long journey, she followed after. She was greatly excited. Throwing up her hands, she exclaimed: "I have lost all. I am ruined. My poor boy was all that was left to me, and now you have robbed me of him. But if there is a just God He will not suffer my wrongs to go unpunished."

Towering up in front of our window rises the stately dome of the Capitol, its top being prepared for the statue of "Freedom." What a contrast! What a spectacle from a prison window!

Some newspapers received to-night contain rumors from Charleston of the raising of the blockade, and also accounts of some dashing exploits of Wheeler's Cavalry, consequently there is great rejoicing among the Confederate prisoners, who can scarcely contain

themselves. The news soon spread, and cheers were given in every room where they are confined. The officers on duty were very lenient, and went around endeavoring to quiet the prisoners, saying the noise sounded badly in the street, and had a damaging effect. Some of the guards, however, were in a very ugly mood, and as one of our men went from the room to get water, one of the soldiers on guard made a wicked thrust at him with his bayonet.

Thursday, Feb. 5.—Snowing hard this morning and continuing until evening, when it turned to rain.

Received parcel to-day from home, containing clothing, etc.

Every day from eight to twelve wagons pass the prison, laden with dead horses and mules, from the camps around Washington. From this alone one can form an idea of the number of animals used up by the army.

Friday, Feb. 6.—Colonel Doster, Provost-Marshall, paid a visit to the prison to-night. He came into our room. On being asked by Mr. Hunter concerning his case, he said: "Gentlemen, your cases have all been decided by military governors."

Sunday, Feb. 8.—A great many ladies and gentlemen pass and repass the prison, many merely from curiosity, perhaps, and the guards are very vigilant to see that they exchange no signals or glances with prisoners. This afternoon two ladies bowed to our window, and a corporal was sent after them. He followed them about half a block, and we could see him talking to them for some little time, but he came back without them.

A little later, two old gentlemen stopped on the

street opposite the prison. One of them took from his pocket a small spy-glass, which he applied to his eye and took a careful survey of the building, to the great discomfort of the sentry, who called to him several times to pass on. The old gentleman paid no attention to the call, and the sentry asked the officer if he



COLONEL WILLIAM P. WOOD, SUPERINTENDENT

should arrest him. The old man then coolly put up his glass, waved his hand and passed on.

To-day being Sunday, the superintendent, Mr. Wood,* went through the prison, making the an-

* Colonel William P. Wood was born in Alexandria, Va., on the 11th of March, 1820, and died at the Soldiers' Home, Washington, D. C., March 20, 1903.

He was a veteran of the Mexican and Civil Wars, and one of the survivors of the Walker filibustering expedi-

nouncement at each door, that all who wished to hear the Gospel according to Jeff Davis could go down to the yard, where a Secesh preacher would give it to them (this was the Rev. Mr. Landstreet, a Confederate chaplain, who is imprisoned here), and all who wanted to hear the Lord God according to Abe Lincoln could be accommodated in Room 16.

Mr. Wood professes to be an infidel, and therefore, while his partisan feelings are very strong on the question of duty and devotion to the Union cause, he is not disposed to view it from a Gospel standpoint. I have heard, however, that he was born and baptized in the Catholic Church, but left it, and in the days of Know-Nothingism became a prominent leader in that party. I went down to the yard, not so much to hear the reverend preacher (though my preference, if any, would have led me to select him) as to enjoy a smoke and a social chat with some of my friends from the other rooms.

tion to Nicaragua. When the Mexican War broke out he enlisted in the mounted ~~titles~~ under Sam. H. Walker, the noted Texan Ranger. After serving out his term, he returned to Washington and married a Maryland lady.

When Stanton became Secretary of War he appointed Wood to be Superintendent of the Military Prisons of the District of Columbia, and concentrated the "State" prisoners and all others in the Old Capitol, to which was afterward added the Carroll Prison (Duff Green's Row).

Wood was the first Chief of the United States Secret Service when it became part of the Treasury Department.

At the time of his death a bill was before Congress to pay him \$15,000 for his services in the famous Brockway case. Wood captured the author and secured the plate of this noted 7.30 Bond counterfeit. The work on this bond was so well executed that it passed as genuine until Jay Cooke & Co. forwarded \$84,000 to the United States Treasury for redemption.

Monday, Feb. 9.—The Tenth New Jersey Regiment is the prison guard here. Among them are many who combine the qualities of soldier and gentleman, but there are some who lack both. The latter, I am glad to say, are in the minority.

Last night before going to our bunks, we were shaking the coal stove. The grate was choked and it was hard to rake out. A guard was sent up to the room, and one said gruffly:

“What is all this noise about?” **1762810**

“We are raking the stove,” said one of our party.

“No, you are not,” replied the fellow; “I know what you are doing—you are dancing, and if I hear any more of it, some of you will get in the guard house.” Being prisoners, we have to submit to this insolence.

This morning, as I was standing at the window looking out, I heard the sentinel on the sidewalk under the window order a prisoner in the next room to go from the window, or he would get a ball through him. I was standing about a foot back from the bars when the sentry, an ill-looking fellow, called out to me:

“Get away from that window.”

“I am not touching the bars,” said I. I had been told by prisoners long confined in the Old Capitol that a prisoner was permitted to look out of the window so long as he did not touch the bars.

“I will put a ball through you, damn you,” said the brute, at the same time cocking his gun and aiming at me. As I thought the cowardly rascal might shoot, and I would only be exposing myself foolishly, I drew back.

When I related this affair to a fellow-prisoner, Mr.

Augustus Williams, he told me that he was a prisoner in the Old Capitol at the time young Wharton was shot, and his room was on the same floor.

It was either in the latter part of March or first of April, 1862, that Jesse W. Wharton, a young man about twenty-five or twenty-six years of age, son of Professor Wharton, of Prince George County, Md., was deliberately murdered by a man belonging to the 91st Pennsylvania Regiment, then on guard duty at the prison. Wharton was standing at the window of his room when the sentry called out to him: "Get away from that window, or I will blow your damned head off." Wharton turned away, walked across the room and again stood at the window as before. The guard, on seeing him, repeated his command, or words to the same effect. Wharton, feeling that as he was violating no rule the guard would not attempt to carry out his threat, paid no further attention, but stood with his arms folded. The sentry (I cannot call him soldier) fired, and the ball struck Wharton in the left hand, passed through the right arm, breaking the bone of the elbow, entered the right side, coming out near the spine. He staggered, and would have fallen, but some of his fellow-prisoners caught him and lowered him gently to the floor. He lingered for seven or eight hours. Before he died he called for the lieutenant commanding the post, and when he came in, the dying man said: "I am dying, and you are the man who caused my death." He said he heard the lieutenant give the man the order to fire.

Williams also mentioned another case, that of Harry Stewart, son of Dr. Frederick Stewart, of Baltimore, a young man less than twenty-five years of age. He

had been to Richmond, and on his return was arrested as a spy and sent to the Old Capitol. One of the sentinels, a member of the 86th Regiment New York Volunteers, agreed for a bribe of fifty dollars to allow him to escape by lowering himself from the window to the pavement below. Stewart waited until the hour appointed, when this particular sentry should be on guard. He then let himself out of the window and was lowered but a few feet when the sentry cried, "Halt!" and fired, the ball striking Stewart's right leg, splintering the knee-bone. He was quickly drawn up by his room-mates, and the prison surgeon amputated the limb. The shock was too great, however, and he died in a short time after the operation. The money (fifty dollars) was found in his pocket, wrapped up in paper, upon which was written, "This is the money I promised you."

Augustus Williams, to whom I am indebted for these facts, is a citizen of Fairfax County, Virginia. Living near Vienna, and being within the Union lines, he was arrested and taken to the Old Capitol. There being no charge against him, except refusal to take the oath, he was released after a short term of imprisonment. Going back to his home, he was again picked up by the first party of troops raiding in his neighborhood, and returned to the Old Capitol. This occurred so frequently that Superintendent Wood came to look upon him as a regular visitor, and would greet him on his arrival with a handshake, and say:

"Hello, Gus; you're back again. You couldn't stay away from us very long."

"No," he would reply. "You fellows treat me so well when I am here. And then, it's such a nice trip to

go back home by way of Fortress Monroe and Richmond."

Some of the prisoners who have gone out recently are suspected of having purchased their freedom at a cash valuation.

A man named George Hammett was brought in on Saturday night with a number of prisoners. He was captured on the Potomac River, and is charged with attempting to run the blockade. He was called down from the room this morning, and on his return said that he told Superintendent Wood he was willing to take the oath. Wood told him that hereafter no one would be released on simply taking the oath; that he might be released on payment of a sum of money—from one to six hundred dollars. These blockade runners, I suppose, are thought to have money, and this, no doubt, is but a plan to extort money from them.

Emanuel Weiler was released to-day. He was taken with Aaron J. King on charge of carrying contraband goods.

Tuesday, Feb. 10.—This morning two ladies passing the building bowed to prisoners at our window. A guard was sent out and brought them in. They were released after fifteen or twenty minutes' detention. Brave soldiers! How fortunate the weather continues cool so that the ladies cannot *bare* arms, as it might interfere with the prison arrangements, making it necessary to double the guard in order to insure the safe keeping of the prisoners and protect our timorous guards.

After dinner a guard came into the room and escorted me down before Captain Parker, who told me

to take a seat, while he proceeded to look over a paper he held in his hand.

"Where are you from?" he asked.

"I have resided in this city for the past seven or eight years," I answered.

"Where were you born?"



James J. Williamson

From picture taken in 1861

"I was born in Baltimore and lived there until I came to Washington."

"What is your occupation?"

"Printer; but since November I have been engaged in a bookstore on Seventh Street."

"You have been South during the war?"

"Yes."

"What were you doing there?"

"I was employed at Ritchie & Dunnivant's." (Ritchie & Dunnivant did the printing for the State and Confederate governments).

"Do you know Henry Howe?"

"I do, sir."

"Did you ever have any difficulty with him?"

"I did. Mr. Howe and a man named Daniels came to Richmond while I was there. They took board at a house kept by Mrs. Graves, on Franklin Street, where I was boarding. On the night of July 3d or 4th, I had a sum of money stolen from my pockets. Mr. Howe and his friend slept in the room adjoining mine. The door between the rooms was left open, while the doors leading from the rooms into the hall were locked. The pants, in the pockets of which I had the money, were hung on a hook near the door, and in the morning the money was gone. Mr. Howe had been boarding in the house for about five weeks without paying any board. That morning he and his friend Daniels left and went to another boarding house. Before leaving, Howe told Mrs. Graves he would not take his baggage away until he paid her all he owed. He put his clothes in Daniels' trunk, and they left with one trunk. The next day Daniels came to me and said: 'Howe has stolen your money. You know, he had none before he left, and now he has plenty, and he is lying in a beer house on Main Street, drunk.' I took Daniels to a detective, to whom he repeated this story. The detective arrested Howe. He was kept in prison for about a week. When brought before the Mayor of Richmond (Joseph Mayo) for final examination, the Mayor said:

"I am confident one of you two men took that

money, but as there are two of you, it is possible one may be innocent, therefore I am obliged to release you both. But I will give you twenty-four hours to leave the city, and if you do not leave within that time I will have you arrested under this act (reading them the vagrant act) and put to work in the chain-gang."

"Have you ever taken an oath of allegiance to the South?" asked Captain Parker.

"No, sir," I replied.

"Would you take an oath to this government?"

"No, sir; I would not."

"That is very strange. That you will not take an oath to support a government under whose flag you live and which protects you. And you born in Maryland, a loyal State, as she has proved to be by the vote of her people."

As I was a prisoner in his hands, I knew it would be folly on my part to enter into an argument on this question, but I said:

"I will not take an oath of allegiance. You take an oath of office which is binding on you so long as you hold office, but you ask me to take an oath of perpetual allegiance—*'at any and all times hereafter, and under all circumstances.'* You have shown no act of mine to prove me disloyal, and I think you have no right to demand such oath."

"Your refusal to take the oath is sufficient proof of your disloyalty. How long have you been here, sir?"

"A week last Saturday. I was arrested and brought here, and have not been able to learn either the name of my accuser or the nature of the accusation."

"I will inform you, then, that Mr. Howe is the principal witness against you. I have done with you for to-day, sir."

I then left him and went back to my room. Here one man is judge, jury and witness.

There are a number of men here in close confinement. We can see them as they are taken out in the yard daily in charge of a guard. None of the other prisoners are allowed to speak to them.

I have been fascinated with the reading of Byron's "Prisoner of Chillon" and with Duinas' picture of the "Man With the Iron Mask," of the mysteries and miseries of the Bastile, and the wretched prisoners who were immured within its dismal walls. I have felt my blood tingle when I read of men who had not been convicted of any crime, and, in some instances, who had committed no crime, yet had been confined for years—often uncared for and forgotten, under the infamous system of the *lettre de cachet*. I regarded them mostly as sensational stories—as fiction—but here the picture is faithfully copied—the *lettre de cachet*, the prison, the murder—all here in the stern reality.

Many persons confined here were arrested, robbed of everything they possessed, and kept merely on suspicion for weeks, and even months, without examination or trial, and sometimes, after an examination and no proof of charges, being still detained.

The occupants of the rooms on the same floor with Room 16 (Rooms 14, 15 and 18), are mostly farmers from Virginia, living either within the Union lines or on disputed territory. Because of their refusal to take the oath of allegiance, they are arrested and

brought to the Old Capitol. They were robbed of their personal property, their negroes run off, and in many instances their houses and farm buildings destroyed.

Among the prisoners with me in Room 16 is an old gentleman named Henry Love. He and his son Llewellyn are both prisoners. The old gentleman seems completely broken down. In telling me the story of his treatment, he said:

"I kept a hotel, and also farmed, near Dumfries, Virginia. I had a farm of 200 acres, all under cultivation, except about 25 acres in wood. My house was taken by Federal troops and used as a hospital, leaving me only three rooms for myself and family. They killed seventeen head of cattle, some of the finest cows you ever saw; my stock was all choice breeds. One cow, with her second calf, was killed, her hindquarters cut off, and the balance, with the calf, left to rot. They killed forty hogs, took two of my best horses, Black Hawks, killed all my poultry; took two stacks of hay, two entire crops of corn, wheat and oats, and two hundred and seventy pounds of bacon. They destroyed all my shrubbery and fences. My place is now as bare as the palm of your hand."

He was afterward taken prisoner, then released on parole, but is now again under arrest. He was called before Parker, who told him there were no charges against him, but as he was a Secessionist he would have to keep him for a while.

Another is James Johnson, of Clarke County, Virginia, who was taken from his home by a raiding party. He was robbed of everything, his horse stolen, and he has been kept a prisoner for two months. He

is sick all the time; appears to be in an advanced stage of consumption.

Mr. Redmond Brawner, who lived at Manassas, lost everything, and he, with his family, were compelled to become refugees. He was arrested, and is now a prisoner 'ere.

Mr. James F. Kerfoot, of Millwood, Clarke County, Virginia, when arrested was buying cattle for the Confederate Government. He had in his possession \$18,000 belonging to the Government and \$400 of his own money. He was stripped of everything.

Another of my room-mates is Mr. George S. Ayre, of Loudoun County, Virginia. At the outbreak of the war he was a wealthy farmer and cattle dealer. He owned one of the finest improved farms in the county and slaves enough to cultivate it. The army under General Geary camped in the neighborhood of his farm, and one day loaded up twenty-six four-horse wagons with corn and provender, and in return the quartermaster gave receipts. Since then he has suffered at the hands of raiding parties, and now is arrested and imprisoned here.

[Mr. Ayre was released a short time before I was and returned to his home. In the Fall of 1863, General Hunter threatened Lynchburg, where Mr. Ayre had a quantity of tobacco stored. Fearing it might be destroyed, he went South, disposed of it, and started for home with the proceeds of the sale. When near James City, in Culpeper County, he met a scouting party from Meade's army, who first carried him to headquarters and then to Washington, where the Provost-Marshal took from him his money, amounting to \$80,000 in Virginia money, a \$1,000 bond, and some

valuable papers, and held him as a hostage for a Captain Samuel Steers, who was captured by Mosby's men. He was held a prisoner for nine months.

His slaves all remained with him, and he continued to cultivate his land, consequently he had good crops on hand in November, 1864, when General Sheridan sent his forces into Loudoun to destroy crops and property in his futile efforts to drive out Mosby and his men, who continued to occupy the same ground until after the surrender of General Lee. Mr. Ayre then had three crops of wheat in the stack. The Union troops burned 8,000 bushels of wheat, 130 tons of hay, 70 acres of corn in the shock, a new barn with all his machinery and farming implements, and drove off 80 fine improved sheep.*

After the war he put in a claim, through his Representative in Congress, endeavoring to recover something for these losses, but his claim was bandied about from committee to committee, and from Congress to the Court of Claims, while the poor old man, now in his 93d year, penniless and broken in health, is unable to get a cent from the Government in return.]

* When General Pope was placed in command of the Army of Virginia, he issued a General Order to his soldiers which virtually gave them unbridled license to plunder and destroy, by depriving the citizens of the section of country through which they were passing of even the trifling amount of protection afforded by safeguards, as may be seen by the copy of the Order here shown:

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF VIRGINIA

Washington, July 25th. }

General Orders No. 13.—Hereafter no guards will be placed over private houses or private property of any description whatever. Commanding officers are responsible for the conduct of the troops under their command,

Wednesday, Feb. 11.—We received some newspapers to-day, and in them I see it stated that Captain Wynne escaped from the Old Capitol Prison on Monday night last, by breaking out a panel of his door. This no doubt gave rise to the ghost story which was going the rounds of the prison at that time, of the ghost without a head who frightened the wits out of some of the sentries.

I heard a great commotion in the prison to-day, and as the noise approached nearer and grew more distinct, I could detect the cry of "Fresh fish! Fresh fish!" which I was afterward told announced the arrival of a fresh lot of prisoners. Among them were a number of blockade runners—eleven white and six negroes. Two of the whites were put in our room. At the advent of a new prisoner, the old ones gather around, anxious to hear the latest news from the outside world.

Captain Thomas Phillips had an interview with Captain Parker to-day. He was sentenced to three months' imprisonment.

Phillips was captain of a vessel captured while attempting to run the blockade into Wilmington, N. C. His clothes and money, together with his quadrant and charts, were all taken from him.

and the articles of war and the regulations of the army provide ample means for restraining them to the full extent required for discipline and efficiency. Soldiers were called into the field to do battle against the enemy, and it is not expected that their force and energy shall be wasted in protecting private property of those most hostile to the government. No soldier serving in this army shall be hereafter employed on such service.

BY COMMAND OF MAJOR-GEN. POPE,

(Signed), Geo. D. Ruggles,

Col. A. A. G. and Chief of Staff.

Blockade running is a dangerous but, when successful, a very profitable business. Of the few ports of the Southern Confederacy used for running the blockade, that of Wilmington, N. C., is the one most frequently chosen, from the fact of there being two entrances, or channels, leading into the Cape Fear River, on which the city of Wilmington is situated, the south entrance being protected by Fort Fisher and Fort Caswell; the north, or new inlet, by Fort Fisher and a small land battery.

[One of the strongest inducements for running the blockade was the enormous value of cotton outside of the Confederacy. A vessel laden with provisions, medical stores, arms and munitions of war for the Confederate Government, effecting an entrance, discharging her load and taking in a return cargo of cotton, which would perhaps yield a profit of five or six hundred per cent., if successful in evading the blockading squadron, would certainly furnish a strong incentive for other daring adventurers to take the risk of a voyage.

The high rate of wages paid to master and crew was always a sufficient inducement to secure a complement of hardy and efficient men for the enterprise.]

Three ladies called at the prison to-day. After they left the building, one of them looked up, and seeing some of the prisoners at the window, bowed to them. The guard called out to the corporal, who started a soldier after them. He pursued them down the street, but returned shortly after, saying they refused to return with him. Of course, we were all pleased with the result.

Thursday, Feb. 12.—Our time is spent in reading.

when we have anything to read; card playing, dominoes, or checkers. Newspapers we get occasionally. Some devote much of their time to smoking, others to relating stories of adventures, with an occasional song and dance.

Among the songs is one, written before my advent into this, my prison home, by some one, of whose name even I am ignorant; but being a picture of our prison life, as well as a faithful expression of the sentiments cherished at the time in the breasts of many who dared not give them utterance outside of these prison walls, without the risk of punishment or exile, I give it here entire and unaltered.

SONG.

Air—Villikins and His Dinah.

All persons confined in the Capitol jail
Must know that *habeas corpus* shall never avail
In taking them hence, for 'twas lately decreed
That laws are denied to all men of our creed.

Chorus

So let's be contented, whatever may come,
We'll live upon hope in the absence of rum;
And in water we'll drink, when affected with
drought,

A health to old Jeff and success to the South.

Now, this one advantage 'tis ours to claim—
Though prisoners in fact, yet proud of that name;
While others their statutes pull down from their shelves
We legally make other laws for ourselves.

Chorus

Abe Lincoln, full gorged with imperial power,
Destroying the work of long years in an hour,
Makes anarchy reign, heaping sin upon sin,
Whilst we are establishing order within.

Chorus

On the streets, in the halls where the multitude throng,
To speak certain things is essentially wrong,
But here we're more free, be it spoken or sung;
There's a lock on the door, but no lock on the tongue.

Chorus

Outside, if you drill with a stick for a gun,
You are called a vile Rebel, and treated as one;
But here we've a barrack in every room,
In lieu of a gun, we disport with a broom.

Chorus

We're healthy within, but there's danger without,
For wherever you turn there's a gun at your snout,
But here we're as safe as a bug in a rug,
And the adage is false, "There's death in a jug."

Chorus

But heed not the twaddle of tyrants and knaves;
Though they the laws make, they cannot make us
slaves;
Unheeding the wrong and maintaining the right,
We'll stick to our creed to the end of the fight.

Chorus

OLD CAPITOL PRISON, *Washington, 1862.*

This would be one feature of the program, with "Maryland, My Maryland," "Dixie," "The Bonnie Blue Flag," and a song, the chorus of which ran—

"Ain't You Glad You're Out of the Wilderness?" but which a few months later was changed to "Ol' Joe Hooker, Come Out of the Wilderness."

When the singing would lag a little, Fax Minor, on whom the sound of music or singing caused a contraction and extension of the muscles, producing an effect like pulling the strings of a supple-jack, would jump up and execute a regular plantation break-down.

Some of our room-mates were gifted with good voices, which, though untrained or uncultivated, were pleasing to the ear, and, combined with the sentiment of the songs, had an inspiring effect on the listeners, like the strains of martial music on the lagging footsteps of the marching soldier.

One day as they were singing "Maryland, My Maryland," Gus Williams, getting up from a bench near the stove, where he sat whittling a stick, advanced toward the group of singers and said:

"You boys sing that well, but I've heard 'My Maryland' sung here in the old building in a way that would make you feel like jumping out of the window and swimming across the Potomac. When Belle Boyd was here I was on the same floor. She would sing that song as if her very soul was in every word she uttered. It used to bring a lump up in my throat every time I heard it. It seemed like my heart was ready to jump out—as if I could put my finger down and touch it. I've seen men, when she was singing, walk off to one side and pull out their handkerchiefs and wipe their eyes, for fear some one would see them doing the baby act."

"She left soon after I came in. I was glad to know that she was released, but we all missed her. Even

some of the Yankees, although they would not show it while she was here; but when she was sent away they missed her sweet singing—Rebel songs though they were. One of them told me it made him feel sad to hear her sing.

“And on Sundays, when there was preaching down in the yard, she would be allowed to come down and sit near the preacher. If you could only have seen how the fellows would try to get near her as she passed. And if she gave them a look or a smile, it did them more good than the preaching. You wouldn’t hear a cuss word from any of them for a week, even if one of the guards would swear at them or threaten them.”*

* Belle Boyd had a most remarkable career. Her life story, with the account of her daring exploits, is more like romance than reality. She was born in Martinsburg, Va., in May, 1843, and was little more than a school girl when the war broke out. Her father, John Read Boyd, was an officer in the Confederate army. The act which first brought her into notice was the shooting by her of a Federal soldier who assailed her mother—she seized her father’s pistol and shot him dead. She then threw all her energy into the struggle. On information furnished by her, Stonewall Jackson drove Banks out of the Shenandoah Valley, for which service Jackson sent a special dispatch thanking her. Her daring led to her capture and imprisonment in the Old Capitol for three months. She was then exchanged for Colonel Corcoran, of the 69th New York Regiment. She went South, was commissioned as Captain in the Confederate army, and served as courier and in the Secret Service.

After the battle of Gettysburg she went home, was arrested and sent to Carroll Prison, Washington, D. C., where she was confined for seven months, and sentenced to be shot, but through the efforts of influential parties she was exchanged for General Nathan Goff, of West Virginia. She afterward sailed from Wilmington, N. C., in the steamer *Greyhound*, with important dispatches for England, but after a chase the steamer was captured by

Friday, Feb. 13.—George Hammett, Davis, Gardner and George were released this afternoon upon taking the oath.

Saturday, Feb. 14.—A number of prisoners were brought in to-day. There are said to be 450 prisoners here at present, the greater portion of them being citizens.

Last night I was awakened by hearing an unusual commotion throughout the building. This morning there were a number of prisoners in the guard house. It is said that Captain Darling and George Adreon escaped. The sentinel was bribed, and a greater number would have escaped but for the indiscretion of the prisoners. They were so jubilant at the prospect of getting out, that they had some whiskey snaked into the room and treated the sentinel. They made him drunk, so that he had to be taken off post, and he was put in the guard house. The new man being ignorant of the deal made with his comrade, the whole scheme failed. There is a standing order to sentinels on each

the Federal cruiser *Connecticut*, and Belle was brought back, court-martialed in Boston, and again sentenced to be shot. Her sentence was afterward commuted, and she was escorted to the Canadian border by a deputy marshal, with the understanding that if she ever returned to the United States she would be put to death.

She died in Kilbourne, Wis., in June, 1890.

Superintendent Wood, of the Old Capitol Prison, is reported as saying of her: "Her face was not what would be called pretty—her features indicated firmness and daring, but her figure was perfect, and a splendid specimen of feminine health and vigor. She was a good talker, very persuasive, and the most persistent and enthusiastic Rebel who ever came under my charge. Her father sent her, from time to time, large sums of money, most of which was expended for the comfort of the Confederate prisoners in the Old Capitol."

floor to allow not more than two men to leave their rooms at a time. Trusting to their arrangement with the sentry, the prisoners who were in the plot would leave singly on this night, at slight intervals, until the guards, seeing so many more going out than the rules permitted, became suspicious and reported their suspicions. Consequently, as each prisoner left his room and went down stairs, he was quietly taken to the guard house, until the number of absentees from the rooms became so numerous the prisoners themselves grew suspicious, and the exodus was stopped.

It is an easy matter to get whiskey here. A bright young contraband, whose ebony face gives proof of the purity of his Congo blood, comes into our room every morning to remove the ashes and refuse. For a trifling sum Charlie will bring in two flasks of whiskey in the breast pockets of his coat, and afterward take back the empty flasks. Many of the prison guards are ready to do the same when asked.

Mr. James Fullerton came to see me to-day. He told me my wife went to the Provost-Marshal's office last Tuesday and asked for a pass to visit me, but was refused.

Sunday, Feb. 15.—Stephen R. Mount, of Loudoun County, Virginia, aged sixty-eight, was put in our room to-day. There is another old gentleman here, named Randolph, aged seventy-five. He is also from Virginia.

An order was issued to-day that no more singing of Rebel songs will be tolerated. Also, that any prisoner hawking or otherwise noticing persons passing on the street, will be put in the guard house.

There are no printed rules for our guidance placed

where they can be seen, and no official instructions as to how we are to act, or to whom we shall make known our necessities. A knowledge can only be gained from conversing with prisoners who have been a long time in the prison, or from actual observation, or from seeing punishment inflicted upon some poor wretch for a violation of an unwritten law. One can only do as you see others do, and if you blindly follow a willful or ignorant transgressor, you must take the punishment of a guilty person.

The daily routine may be summed up as follows:

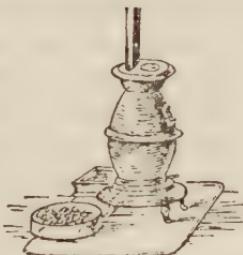
The first call in the morning is when the door is thrown open and breakfast announced. All in the room then scamper down to the yard and into the mess-room already described.

About nine o'clock the door is again opened and a voice shouts in tones loud enough to be heard by all, "Sick Call." Then all who have need of medicine or treatment go to the hospital, located in a two-story wooden building, an extension of the main building, and reached by a flight of steps leading up from the prison yard.

The next sensation is the dinner call. This gives the prisoners a half hour, most of which, if not all, is spent in the yard. The yard is about one hundred feet square, partly paved with bricks or cobble-stones.* On the side of this yard, extending from this wooden building occupied as sutler's shop, mess-room and hospital, and running back to the gate, is a one-story

* It was in a corner of this yard, a few years later, after the close of the war, that poor Wirz, condemned and tried by a Military Court Martial, was judicially murdered.

stone building in which are the cook house, guard house and wash house. Back of this building are the sinks used by the prisoners. These are wide trenches with a long wooden rail in front, after the manner of the trenches in the camps, except that when those in the camps become offensive they are filled in with earth and new ones dug. The presence of these sinks, used for months by several hundred men, it may be safely said, did not contribute to the beauty of the



STOVE WHICH STOOD IN CENTER OF ROOM 16

scenery or add sweetness to the tainted air. Any further description, I think, is better left to the imagination than expressed in words.

After returning to our rooms there is another lull until supper-time, when we enjoy the freedom of the prison yard until it is rudely broken into by the gruff voice of the sergeant: "Time's up. Go to your rooms."

Next comes the roll-call, when the prisoners are lined up in their respective rooms to answer to their names as called.

Lastly, taps is sounded, by the guard marching through the halls and calling out at the doors of the rooms: "Lights out." At this warning cry every light must be extinguished, and the prisoners are com-

elled to go to their bunks or sit in the dark. And here is where our rusty fat pork, saved by us from the mess-room table, is made do good service.

One night we sat around the stove, with a quantity of this over-rich food, contributed by the inmates of our room, one of whom sat in front of the stove and threw in piece by piece as it burned away. This shed a light over the room, and it was seen by the sentry pacing his beat in front of the building. He called out "Corporal of the guard, Post No. 1."

In a few minutes the sound of approaching footsteps was heard in the hall outside, the door was thrown open and a corporal with guard entered.

"What are you doing with a light here?" said he.

"We have no light here," was the reply.

"You have," said the corporal, "we can see it plainly from the street."

"Oh, that is only a piece of fat meat we threw in the stove."

The corporal, although he saw the flickering remains through the open stove door, marched away with an incredulous and unsatisfied air.

Tuesday, Feb. 17.—Captain Parker called me down this afternoon. He told me he had received a letter from Mr. James Fullerton, stating that my wife was ill, and my eldest child very ill with dropsy after scarlet fever. He said that under the circumstances he would grant me a parole for one day only, to see them. I was accordingly released to report to Superintendent Wood at five o'clock to-morrow. On reaching home, I found my son Henry lying ill, delirious, and so changed I could scarcely recognize him.

Wednesday, Feb. 18.—At Home.—Mrs. Fullerton called this morning. She said she had been to the prison and had carried a few things, including my wife's picture. The officer who received them said he would give them to me. She then handed him a note from my mother, stating that my wife was recovering from her illness and was able to go about the house. When requested to hand me this the officer said: "There can be no communication, unless it goes through the Provost-Marshall's office." So I had been denied this slight gratification, of knowing that my wife, whom I left suffering from an attack of typhus fever, was improving in health. This afternoon I went to prison and reported myself to Captain Higgins. I told him my child was very ill; that the disease was just at its height and his recovery doubtful. That under the circumstances I would like to have my parole extended for a short time, until I saw how the disease would likely terminate. He told me he would see Captain Parker. After hearing my request, Parker asked if I could get a certificate to the effect that my child was dangerously ill. Told him I could. He said: "If you will bring me such certificate from the attending physician, I will grant you a parole until Friday, at 5 P.M." He added, "As you are living in this city and refuse to take the oath, it proves that your sympathy is with the South." After leaving the prison I went to the office of Dr. Toner and procured the required certificate.

Thursday, Feb. 19.—This morning went to headquarters of Military Governor, and gave the certificate to Captain Parker, according to agreement.

From a conversation which I overheard while standing on the steps at the Provost-Marshal's office, one can get a faint idea of the state of society now existing under the infamous spy system. A sergeant and corporal were standing near the doorway, conversing with a citizen:

Sergeant—You know he is a Secessionist?

Citizen—Yes.

Sergeant—Then go in and report him.

Citizen (smiling and shrugging his shoulders)—I don't like—

Corporal—You have gone too far now; you must go in and report him.

Sergeant—Your name won't appear at all in this.

The citizen still appeared to hesitate, but the two were still urging him when I passed on.

Fostered by partisan hatred or private malice, a system of espionage has been established which is felt on every side. Servants and employees are tampered with, witnesses are bought or threatened. Actions or expressions, in themselves perfectly innocent, are perverted and by misconstruction made to assume an air of treason or disloyalty. In this way persons are often arrested and imprisoned for months without trial or without even knowing the nature of the charge against them or the name of their accuser.

Friday, Feb. 20.—Henry passed a very uneasy night. The doctor says he is not so well this morning as yesterday; still, he says he has hopes of saving him. I hope for the best, yet fear the worst. This afternoon, between four and five o'clock, reported myself at the Old Capitol. After having my valise searched, I retired to my room, where I found a num-

ber of prisoners in addition to those I left when I went out on parole.

Captain Phillips was released from guard house this afternoon. A few days ago he asked Wood to give him a parole. Wood refused, and said no paroles would be granted. Phillips said a man who was confined under similar circumstances to himself had been given a parole on the day his vessel was to be sold. Soon after this interview I saw Phillips and Wood running around the yard, both much excited. Phillips said, "Come on; I will show you the man." Wood said, "Go on; I'll prove either you or him to be a liar." When Phillips found the man, Wood was not to be found.

A day or two after this, Phillips was going into the office to pay the clerk, Mr. Drew, for a pair of spectacles, when Wood, who was in the office at the time, called out to him in a rough manner, and Phillips went out and closed the door. When he got to his room a guard came up and took him to the guard house, from which he was only released to-day. Wood said he had not intended to keep him there so long, but had forgotten him.

How faithfully does history repeat itself. How many unfortunates have been arrested, thrown into prison, and their accusers having accomplished their object in placing them in durance, cared no more about them, and their jailers were totally indifferent in the matter. Wood said the principal cause for his punishment was the indifference with which Phillips appeared to treat him.

Sunday, Feb. 22.—I was told there are over five hundred prisoners here now. When those in our room

were counted last night there were found to be thirty-four. A number of *fresh fish* have been brought in since my return.

Sixty-two prisoners were brought here from Camp Chase. Some have been imprisoned for fifteen months. About twenty of them have no charge against them except refusal to take the oath.

Goldsmith said that while he was in the guard house a Union soldier was put in who was drunk and noisy, and the lieutenant came in, slapped him in the face and kicked him several times.

One of my fellow-prisoners is an old gentleman from Virginia, named John B. Hunter. He is over sixty years of age. He is detained without any charge whatever, but as a hostage for a man named Stiles, who has made himself notorious as a spy and detective, and by acting as guide in piloting raiding parties through Virginia. Mr. Hunter was called down last night by Captain Parker, who told him information had been received that Stiles had been released, and that he, too, would be released. That he could leave the prison then or wait until to-day. He has been in prison forty-two days altogether, and his health is now very poor.

Another of my room-mates is John Carr, of Fauquier County, Va.; he is a widower, who was about to be married. As he was journeying on to the home of his intended bride, where all the preparations had been made for the approaching nuptials, he was rudely seized by a scouting party and landed here in the Old Capitol. He has been unfortunate in his matrimonial ventures. He was married to his second wife a few years before the war, and started on a

bridal tour through some of the Western States. It happened that the cholera was raging at the time in some parts of the West, and while going down the Mississippi River on a steamboat his wife was suddenly taken ill with cholera and died on the boat. The passengers became frightened and put him ashore with the dead body of his wife at a desolate spot on the banks of the river, at night and in a heavy storm. He was compelled to remain there through the long, dreary night, sitting beside the corpse, holding a blanket over it to protect it from the rain, and keep the wind from blowing away the covering. The splash of the water, the puffing and snorting of the boats on the river, with the shrill blast of their whistles or the bellowing of their signals in passing each other, found an echo in the moaning and shrieking of the angry wind. These mingled sounds to the sad watcher in his lonely vigil seemed a requiem for the dead.

Tuesday, Feb. 24.—Three of the prisoners brought in last Saturday were Italians—Peter Eorio, Raphael Rinaldi and Marco Comastri. They appear to be very intelligent men, and I have derived much pleasure from conversing with them. They have been in this country about three years. Living in the South, and wishing to return to their native country, they asked and received permission from the Confederate authorities to pass through the lines; having first procured certificates to the effect that they were citizens of Italy and as to their intentions. On their arrival in Washington they were arrested and brought to this place.

To-day the Commission appointed to try political prisoners commenced their sittings.

Fourteen prisoners were sent off to-day upon taking the oath. Quite a number have been released lately by so doing. Many of them say they do not regard the oath—that it is unconstitutional, unlawful, and not in any sense binding.*

* Regarding the Oath, a writer in the *New York Freeman's Journal* vented his feelings thus:

THE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

Parody on the Soliloquy of Hamlet.

To swear or not to swear, that is the question.
 Whether 'tis nobler in a man to suffer
 Imprisonment, exile and poverty,
 Or take the oath amidst a sea of troubles,
 And by submission, end them? To swear, to lie,
 Once more; and, by a lie, to say we end
 Starvation, nakedness and all the ails
 That Rebs are heir to—'tis a perjury
 Devoutly to be wished. To swear—to lie;
 To lie!—perchance a change; aye, there's the rub,
 For in that change the angry Rebs may come,
 When from these lands the Feds are driven out,
 Must give us pause; there's the respect
 That makes a man of honor hesitate.
 But who would bear at the dead hour of night
 To be 'roused from his sleep—dragged out of bed—
 To be locked up in jail—to hold his tongue—
 Before a mock tribunal to be tried,
 And then condemned for deeds he knew not of,
 When he himself these evils might avoid
 By perjury? Who would detectives bear—
 To look about before he opes his mouth,
 But that the dread of bayonets and chains—
 The provost-marshall, from whose iron grip
 No victim e'er escapes, puzzles the will,
 And makes us swallow every oath that comes,
 Than fly to evils that we dread still more?
 Thus, love of ease makes *patriots* of us all!
 And thus our sympathies are sicklied o'er
 With confiscation, banishment and death!
 With this regard, we doff our principles,
 And swallow Abe, the Nigger and the Oath!

NED CRACKER.

Wednesday, Feb. 25.—This morning one of the negroes in the breakfast room accused a prisoner of taking two pieces of bread instead of one, which is supposed to be one man's portion. Although the man denied having done so, the negro persisted in saying he had, and the man was put in the guard house.

Peter and John Flaherty were called before Parker. They are British subjects and are provided with British protection. They had been at work for some time in Richmond, and were on their way North when arrested. Parker asked them why they left Richmond. "Thinking to do better, sir," promptly replied Peter. They were released with the injunction to leave the city within forty-eight hours.

Thursday, Feb. 26.—Three more prisoners brought into our room—twenty-nine now in all. Some Yankee sutlers were brought in lately. They are very bitter in denouncing the Federal Government.

It is rumored an attempt will be made by some of the prisoners to escape. The matter was talked over to-day in our room. Many plans were suggested as being feasible and attended with but little danger. One said it would be an easy matter, when we were out in the yard, and the wagon came in to deliver bread, for the prisoners to make a rush for the gate, and before the gate could be closed quite a number could get out.

"But the guards would fire on us, and some of us would be killed," said Fax Minor.

"Of course," was the reply, "somebody might be shot—perhaps killed. We must expect that. But many would get away safely."

"Yes, that is all true," returned Fax; "but just suppose there was only one killed, and that one was poor Fax—what then?"

A noticeable character in the prison yard at one time during the half hour allowed for recreation was a Hebrew named Fleggenheimer. He was captured while attempting to run the blockade on the Potomac, and his goods confiscated. Like Rachel of old, he would not be comforted, but was continually bewailing his loss. One of my room-mates, John Pentz, of Baltimore, finding that sympathy only added fuel to the fire of his distress, sought to divert his thoughts into another channel by bantering him.

"Oh, Sledgehammer" (as Pentz was accustomed to call him), "don't worry; you'll soon be out of this place, and it won't take you long to make up what you lost."

"Ah, but, Mr. Benty, I lose more ash five t'o'isand dollars."

"Well, you can get that back in the profit of one good trip."

"And den it vash all borrowed monish."

"Then that is so much the better—you won't lose anything."

"Oh, you don't know all, Mr. Benty. My poor wife, she yust git a leetle baby, unt ven she hear dis it makes her right down stone dead."

From conversations had with Western prisoners, I judge there is more intense bitterness of feeling in the West, particularly in Missouri and Kentucky, than in the Eastern border section. One old Missourian in our room said he was from Schuyler County, and had been in prison since the 12th of August. That

one of the prisoners in the Court House, named Ford, was shot with a pistol by one of the guards.

He said the Union men were called "Sheepskins," and they perpetrated the most villainous outrages. That on one occasion a party arrested a man, and while carrying him through the village, some little boys playing marbles, cried out: "Here comes the militia," and ran away. One of the "Sheepskins" fired into the crowd of children and killed a boy twelve years old. They picked the child up, carried him to his home, and threw him in the door to his mother, saying: "Here is one we've kept from growing up to be a damned Secesh."

Another man told me he was in prison with some of the men who were executed by General McNeil. He said he was playing cards with Wade when he was called out. Wade put down his cards, saying he knew he was called out to be killed. There was among the doomed men one old man with a large and helpless family. A brave young hero volunteered to take the old man's place, saying he had none to leave behind to regret him or feel the loss. He was accepted. His savage executioners, dumb to this noble exhibition of heroism and self-sacrifice, sent him off on his coffin with the others.

I afterward learned the facts concerning this brutal tragedy:

In the Fall of 1862, the Confederates, under Colonel James Porter, captured the town of Palmyra, and during their occupancy a man named Andrew Allsman, an ex-soldier of the Third Missouri Cavalry (said to have been a spy), disappeared.

After the Confederates evacuated the town and

McNeil returned, he learned of the abduction of Allsman, and thereupon issued a notice, that unless Allsman was returned within ten days he would retaliate upon the Rebel prisoners then in his hands. At the expiration of the ten days, ten prisoners then in his custody: Willis Baker, Thomas Humston, Morgan Bixler, and John Y. McPheeters, of Lewis County; Herbert Hutson, John M. Wade and Marion Lair, of Ralls County; Captain Thomas A. Sidner, Monroe County; Eleazer Lake, Scotland County, and Hiram Smith, Knox County, were selected—ten men, to give up their lives for one man *missing*.

Three Government wagons drove to the jail, with ten rough board coffins. The condemned men were taken from the prison, seated upon their coffins in the wagons, and driven to the place of execution—the Fair Ground. There the coffins were arranged in a row, six or eight feet apart. Thirty soldiers of the Second Missouri State Militia were drawn up in line facing the coffins. The ten men knelt upon the grass between the coffins. A prayer was offered up by Rev. R. M. Rhoades, and the prisoners each took his seat upon the foot of his coffin. Two accepted bandages; the others refused. The officer in command then stepped forward and gave the command: "Ready—aim—fire!" Two of the prisoners fell backward upon their coffins, dead. Captain Sidner sprang forward and fell with his face to the soldiers, and died immediately. He had requested the soldiers to aim at his heart. The other seven were not killed, and the reserves were called and put an end to their lives with their revolvers.

Among the Camp Chase prisoners are three little

boys, their ages ranging from ten to fourteen. I saw one in the yard to-day. The men called him "John Morgan's Orderly." He was dressed in gray and seemed a shrewd, bright little fellow. He told me he was fourteen years of age. That he had been with John Morgan, and was captured while carrying a letter from General John C. Breckenridge to General John Morgan. He said he had been in prison thirteen months.

The second boy was held on charges similar to the one first mentioned. The third, and youngest, says he does not know why he was arrested, or why he was brought here.

Friday, Feb. 27.—Boyd Barrett and others, ill with smallpox, were removed in ambulances to-day.

Messrs. Ayre, Carr, and Brawner were called to-day and the oath offered them. They refused to take it and were marked for exchange.

It is said one of the prison officials was going around the yard last night, dressed in Confederate uniform, endeavoring, by offering bribes, to test the fidelity of the guards.

Saturday, Feb. 28.—I slept but little last night. Some prisoners who were put in the room were very noisy, and I was cold. I had one sheet and one blanket, and I had to take my overcoat for a covering. When I got warmed up, the mice became lively and commenced a game of tag. They appear to think it fine fun chasing one another under the board pillow at my head, and then running over my bunk and crawling about through the folds of my blanket. When I shake them off they scamper away, only to return when they see I am quiet again.

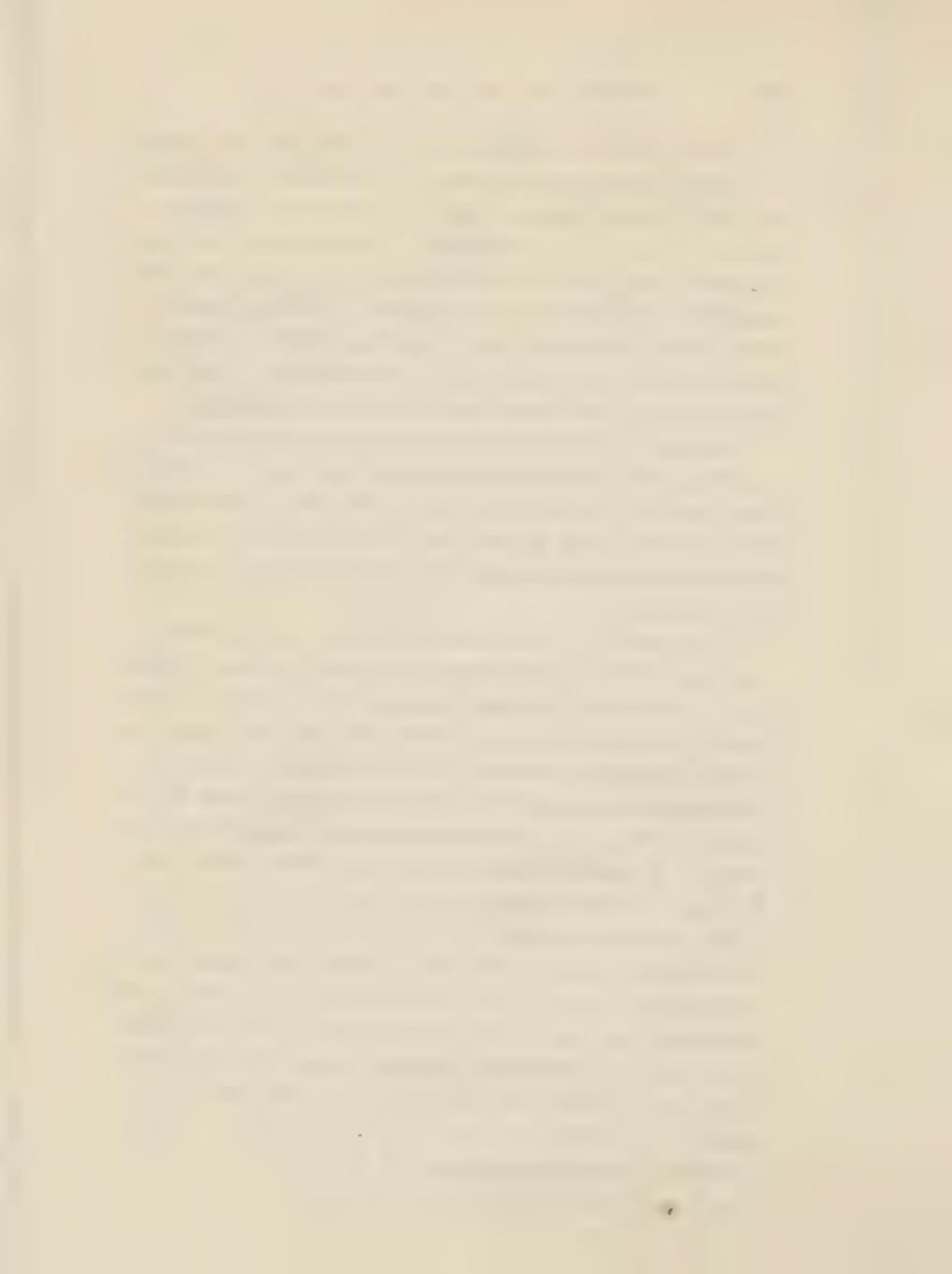
There is also a large force of bedbugs in the room, and they send out detachments and raiding parties to all the different bunks, and draw their full supply of rations from the occupants. Sometimes we get together and have a round-up, and a promiscuous slaughter, regardless of age or sex. But they must recruit from the other side, like the Yankee army, as we can notice no diminution in the forces. I suppose, like the poor, we will always have them with us.

Owing to the dirty and overcrowded condition of the building, we have another pest in the shape of an insect, smaller than the one just mentioned, but equally bloodthirsty, who makes his presence felt, and has reduced us to such a condition that we have to scratch for a living.

This morning, while standing near the window, I saw two little boys, ten or twelve years of age, standing on the street corner, opposite the prison. They were looking down the street and did not hear the guard calling to them to leave the corner. Presently a corporal was sent over and the children, now in the act of moving on, were arrested and brought into the prison. I stood at the window for some time, but I did not see them pass out.

Six prisoners brought into our room to-day. Thirty-seven now in the room, with bunks for twenty-one; the balance sleep on the floor as best they can. At night the floor is completely taken up by sleeping men, so we can only walk the floor by stepping over them. They roll themselves in their blankets and go to sleep.

Frank Thornton released on parole to-day. John Pentz went out at night.



A man in Room 15 threw a piece of bread out of the window into the street. In consequence of this, all the inmates of the room, twenty-eight in number, were confined to the room during the half-hour usually allowed for recreation, and put on bread and water diet—two pieces of bread being allowed them daily.

Monday, March 2.—Commission in session to-day.

The surgeon came in and made inquiries as to the number in our room, etc. Thirty-nine in room—beds for twenty-one. Call for all who desire to be vaccinated to come into the hospital.

In the dull uniformity of prison life every trifling event which breaks the monotony and diverts the attention, for the time, from the unpleasant reality of our situation is seized upon and becomes a subject of conversation. To-day a drove of mules was passing the prison on their way to some of the camps or corrals, and this brought out a number of stories illustrating peculiar traits or features of that useful and much-abused creature—the mule.

“When the Confederate army was encamped at Manassas,” said Bennett, “after the battle of Bull Run, the mules, being fastened to the wagons by their halters, after eating their supply of provender, would start in, biting and chewing the feed-boxes and wagon bodies. They were not satisfied with the quantity of long-feed that was dealt out to them and sought to make good the deficiency by chewing up the wagons. To prevent the total demolition of wagons, details of men were sent out daily to cut and bring in loads of hoop-poles for belly-timber, as Bennett termed it. These were spread out before the mules who no doubt

found the wood in its crude state as appetizing as when fashioned into wagons or feed-boxes."

"An old friend of mine, Dr. Green," said John Carr, "was at one time induced to purchase a lot of mules. They were sold at a sacrifice, and knowing there was a constant demand for mules in army circles, he flattered himself that he had been cut out for a sharp trader, but had always before that time missed his opportunity; that he had made a good investment, and now having the long-delayed opportunity, he would surely get all there was in it. So when he had paid his money he patted himself on the back—figuratively—in a patronizing manner and turned a round dozen well-conditioned mules into his pasture.

"In this field where he had put the mules his riding-horse was accustomed to graze. A close intimacy sprang up between the mules and the horse. On Sunday, when Dr. Green brought up his horse in order to attend service at the village church, he noticed a commotion among the mules, but paid no further attention to them.

"While riding to church with his wife, however, he heard a noise on the road behind them, a tramping of hoofs, with a nickering and braying. Soon the mules came in sight, frisking about and apparently delighted to overtake their newly-found friend and comrade, the horse. They refused to be sent back, and the Doctor and his wife rode into town to church at the head of a drove of mules."

Tuesday, March 3.—Last night about midnight I was awakened by a noise and great commotion in the building. A man in the adjoining room cried out lustily, "Fire! Fire!" Then there was a knocking

at the doors. The flames were breaking out through a board partition which cuts off a portion of our room, making an entry to the adjoining room. The fire had not gained much headway, however, and a little water soon extinguished it. For a time there was great confusion and excitement. The guard at the door, as soon as he was aware of the fact, cried out "Corporal of the guard, Post No. 5—Fire!" Then the word was passed from sentinel to sentinel, until it rang through the building. Men were jumping out of their bunks, hastily putting on their clothes, some cursing, calling for things they were unable to find—"Where's my pants?" "Where's my boots?" In the confusion one man would grab up an article belonging to another—often a misfit. I lay quietly in my bunk for a while. I felt there could be little danger from fire occurring in the rooms occupied by either the prisoners or guards; for if by any mischance a fire should break out, it would soon be discovered and quickly extinguished. Or, if in the outhouse or kitchen, they, being small buildings, the fire could be put out before it communicated to the main building—the prison itself.

At the time of the greatest excitement one man said: "Look out of the window and see the light. The building is on fire." When this light was found to proceed from the rising moon, it had a quieting effect on the panic. A sergeant came in with a light and searched around to find out how the fire originated. After this a lieutenant with a few privates came in under arms, and examined thoroughly and questioned, but no one appeared to know how it started. If the fire had progressed to any great extent before discovery,

no doubt many of the prisoners would have escaped as it would have been impossible for the guards to have kept in check the large number of prisoners now in the building.

Wednesday, March 4.—Congress adjourned to-day. From the prison window we saw the flag lowered.

At night Superintendent Wood came to the door and called me out of the room. He walked over and sat at the foot of the stairs in the big hall leading to the floor above, and told me to sit down beside him. He asked me where I belonged. I said:

“I am a citizen of Washington. This is my home.”

“What were you doing South?” asked Wood.

“Working at my business.”

“Where did you work?”

“At Ritchie & Dunnivant’s.”

“What kind of work was done there?”

“They did the State printing and a portion of the Government work.”

“When did you go South?”

“Just before the commencement of hostilities.”

“How did you get back?”

“I came across the Potomac River.”

“You didn’t bring any letters, or anything of that kind?”

“No; I brought nothing but my wife and children.”

“Are you willing to take an oath to support the Government?”

“No, sir.”

“Then we will have to send you back South.”

I said, “Mr. Wood, I am in your hands, a prisoner, and powerless to resist. I am obliged to submit to whatever disposition you may make of me.”

"A couple of gentlemen called to see me about you," said Mr. Wood, "and I am anxious to do all I can for you. You know that this city is in a special manner under the care and jurisdiction of the President and Congress, and if you are a citizen of this place you ought to submit to the law."

"But, Mr. Wood," said I, "there is no law to compel me to take this oath."

"You violated the law when you crossed the Potomac."

"In what manner?"

"In running the blockade."

"This city is my home. I was South with my family. How could I get home with them without crossing the Potomac. What law did I violate?"

"I have no time to spare," said Mr. Wood, as he arose and walked away, and I went back to my room.

One more prisoner brought into our room—thirty-seven now in.

Thursday, March 5.—Boyd Barrett returned. He had a slight attack of varioloid. Haskins, of South Carolina, who was taken away with him, died of smallpox. Another of the party is in a fair way of recovery.

At night about one hundred and fifty Union soldiers were brought in; mostly for desertion and insubordination. They are very bitter in their denunciation of the Government. They seem to care but little for the guards, and do pretty much as they please. Whether from fear or sympathy, the guards appear indifferent to their words or behavior. Some of the soldiers say they "enlisted to fight for the Union and

not for the nigger." One said, "If they bring up all the men who are dissatisfied, the Government will have to build more prisons."

Friday, March 6.—My wife came to see me. A corporal came up and escorted me down to the reception room. On entering the room we were seated in chairs placed opposite each other, and at a distance of about three or four feet apart. Then a little puppy, who acts as a clerk or detective, took his seat in a chair which he drew up in front of, and between the chairs occupied by myself and wife; where he could not fail to hear every word that passed. Then he threw himself back in his chair with an air of self-importance, as if to say, "Now you can go on, with my permission." He interrupted our conversation several times by volunteering remarks altogether uncalled for. My wife said that my mother and she were worried about me at home, as they heard I would be sent away. Hearing this the fellow turned to a lieutenant who was in the room, and asked in a tone which could be heard across the room:

"Can you give me the number and names of the prisoners in Rooms 15 and 16, as they are about to be sent away?"

He knew I was in Room 16, and thought to annoy us by asking this question. At the end of fifteen minutes our conversation was abruptly brought to an end. My wife was compelled to take the oath before she was allowed to see me.

She told me that my son Henry had taken a change for the better within an hour after I left him, at the expiration of my parole, and, knowing I would be anxious to hear about him, they sent me a message to

that effect immediately. Two weeks have elapsed, but the message has never been delivered.

Young Thomas Hurst was called down to see his sister directly after my wife left, and he told me he had the same experience as we had, and the same remark was made in the presence of his sister as that used to annoy my wife.

Three Federal soldiers confined here attempted to escape by way of the cellar. Two succeeded and one was caught.

Sunday, March 8.—About 1:30 P.M., one hundred and fifty prisoners were brought in. They came from St. Louis direct; they are mostly soldiers. They have been in prison—some one, others three and five months. With regard to the soldiers this is a violation of the cartel by the United States authorities. The cartel of exchange provides that prisoners of war be discharged on parole within ten days after capture. These expect to be exchanged about the 16th of this month. They were brought through Baltimore, arriving in this city last night, and were crowded in a place which, from the description given, I judge to be the Central Guard House. They say that they were put into rooms where they were obliged to pass the night in a standing posture, as there was not room enough to lie down. After being brought here they were kept standing in the damp yard (part of the time it was raining), until after ten o'clock at night, when they were removed to the adjoining houses (Duff Green's Row), Carroll Prison.

Two men, Wesley Phillips and Mitchell, were released to-day. They were captains of schooners engaged in carrying sutlers' stores to the Army of the

Potomac. They were Baltimoreans and very fine men.

Monday, March 9.—Fine day. After a rain the water drips from the window cornices or eaves of the roof, to the ground, sometimes dropping over the doorway. As some of the guards were on the door-step they caught the drops and said the men in our room were spitting out of the window. A corporal was sent to the room and although the men explained the matter to him—said they had not spit out, and called his attention to the falling drops, the window was shut down and we are now forced to remain in this close room, with no ventilation and the breaths of thirty-seven men poisoning the air. Our keepers appear to take pleasure in annoying and persecuting those in their power, knowing they can do so without fear or resistance or retaliation.

A man who either drunk or crazy, passing on the opposite side of the street, looked up at the window and seeing the crowd of prisoners, laughed and waved his hat. The officer standing at the door said to the sentry, "You had better bring that fellow in, anyhow." He was accordingly brought in.

There is a man in Room 16, named Armand. He claims to be from Louisiana. He is of very dark complexion, with black hair, short black beard and mustache. He always wears a blue uniform, but I never saw him with a hat, either indoors or out. He is looked upon with suspicion and shunned by all. By many he is thought to be a spy. If he goes out of the room for any purpose whatever, the other prisoners exchange knowing glances, and shake their heads in a manner indicating distrust. Some do not hesitate to say: "He is now going down to make his report to

Wood." Every act is observed and commented on.

No one cares to be seen speaking to him or noticing him. If he approaches one with a pleasing expression on his face, as if about to speak, the person so approached will turn from him with a look of contempt, or, if addressed, return a half-hearted reply, and with a stealthy look around, as if to see if anyone observed him, shy off in a direction opposite that in which Armand appears to be going. Even the Yankee prisoners are shown more consideration, and more regard paid to their wants and advances. Men who occasionally bestow upon him a look of pity—such as they would give to a poor friendless dog—will quickly turn away if he shows a disposition to return a grateful acknowledgment.

Although I have no means of ascertaining whether this treatment is deserved, or if he is unjustly suspected, yet I cannot shut out from my breast a feeling of pity for the poor fellow.

At night, when all others were soundly sleeping in their bunks, I have often watched him as he paced the floor or stood at the window, his hands folded behind him, looking out into the deserted street, as lonely and forsaken as himself, singing, or rather crooning in a low, mournful, but not unmusical tone:

"When the sad, chilly winds of December,
Stole my flowers, my companions, from me."

Tuesday, March 10.—Eoreo, Comastro and Rinaldi, the three Italians I have already mentioned, were called before the Colonel acting in place of Parker, who is sick.

He questioned them in regard to their arrest, etc.

He told them there was no reason for keeping them and they would be released to-morrow. Eoreo promised to see my wife and tell her what I could not write her with any certainty of its being delivered. This I learned afterward he did faithfully.

Old Mr. Love was again called before the colonel. He had a certificate from the prison surgeon, stating that he was ill. That the confinement was injuring him, and he should be discharged. The Colonel told him his case would have to go before the Commission.

One of the prison guards to-day snapped his gun twice at a man passing on horseback, but it missed fire each time.

Captain Thomas Phillips was released this afternoon.

Wednesday, March 11.—This morning as Keleher was looking from the window, singing:

"The niggers we will sell
And the Yankees send to hell," etc.,

a little fussy lieutenant, named Thackery, came bristling up, saying, "I'll send *you* to hell," and as if intending to carry out his threat literally, rushed at Keleher with his arm outstretched to push or grasp him, but just before the hand touched him, Keleher stepped to one side and Thackery, unable to check or recover himself, went spinning halfway across the room. The men, none of whom have any love or good feeling for Thackery, laughed at his discomfiture, and this so irritated the crestfallen lieutenant that he had the guards take Keleher off to the guard house.

James Taylor and James Stant were called and took

the oath not to attempt to run the blockade again. Aaron Lewis released.

Thursday, March 12.—Three more prisoners brought into our room last night. One belonged to Stuart's Horse Artillery; the other two were citizens.

James Ewell released. Russell released; he had British protection. Frank Thornton, who had been out on parole, returned.

A man confined in the guard house knocked down a portion of the partition. He was taken out and tied up by the wrists to a tree. He broke the cords after a time and released himself. He was then removed, but I do not know what was done with him after.

Among my room-mates I have discovered an old schoolmate, Thomas Holbrook, of Baltimore. He and I were schoolboys together at a school kept by Martin J. Kerney, in a little one-story brick building, situated on Exeter Street, between Baltimore and Fayette, Baltimore City. Mr. Kerney was a graduate of Mount St. Mary's College, Emmitsburg, Md. After giving up school teaching he entered into the practice of law and was afterward a member of the Maryland State Legislature. He was the author of a number of educational works, some of which are still used. Three of the Booth brothers—Edwin, the celebrated actor; John Wilkes, who shot Lincoln, and Joseph Adrian Booth, who afterward became a physician, and also John Sleeper Clarke, the comedian, who later on married Asia Booth, a sister of the Booth brothers, were all attending this school at the same time with us. Holbrook is quite a valuable addition to our company. He is exceedingly clever in handling playing cards and often amuses us with exhibitions of tricks, in which

he displays remarkable dexterity. He thus helps us while away many a tedious hour. He was at one time in the Navy, and, like all seafaring men, is handy about the house. We all are glad when it is Tom's day in the kitchen as cook for the mess. He will say, "Well, boys, what will it be to-day—lobscouse or skilligalee?"

He will take a ham-bone, from which most of the meat has been cut, and sitting down will patiently pick off with a pocket-knife every scrap of fat and lean, and with the addition of a few potatoes or other ingredients, will serve up quite a tasty little side dish for our table.

An old man who had been confined here for some time, was released a few days ago. He was bent with age, and very feeble and childish, so that when here he would often get lost in the building. After wandering about for some time he came back. He said he thought the war was over when he was sent off. That he was away from home; 84 years of age; with no place to go and no means of getting to his home. He begged to be taken back.

At night a sergeant came into the room with a list of names which he called over; my name being among the number. He asked each one if he wanted to go to Richmond. All those who are booked for Richmond are greatly elated at the prospect of their release from prison and a trip to Dixie. Whiskey was smuggled in and several of the fortunate ones were quite lively. Very little sleep to-night for anyone here.

Fitzhugh Carter, or as he was familiarly called "Chew Carter," was a sprightly little fellow from Fauquier County, Virginia. Brought up on a farm and enjoying in his early life the companionship of

the little darkies, he had acquired much of their quaint dialect and rollicking manners. On this night Chew had by some means got more than a fair share of the smuggled whiskey.

When the lieutenant came in for roll-call, it was the custom for the prisoners to form in one line, while the lieutenant with the guard would stand at the head, and as each man's name was called he would step out, turn and face the line he had just left. This would be repeated until, when all the names were called, the new line would be formed opposite that formerly occupied by the first line.

As it was a difficult matter for poor Chew to preserve his equilibrium, his comrades endeavored to keep him steady on the perpendicular by bracing him on either side. All went well until it came his turn to answer. When the officer called "Fitzhugh Carter," Chew stood erect, pushed his hat back from his forehead and snapped out "Yer, sah!" and lurched forward to the line opposite. The loud and jerky way he was answered appeared to strike the lieutenant, for he raised his head and looked to where the sound came from and then cast his eyes down again to his roll. Just at this moment Chew, apparently satisfied with the accomplishment of his little feat, looked toward the head of the line and observing the action of the lieutenant, said "Who de hell keers foh yo' damn ol' roll-call?"

The lieutenant heard the voice, but did not catch the words. He looked down the line. The men who stood on either side of Chew nudged him to keep quiet, and all looked so innocent of any wrong-doing that the officer evidently disbelieved his ears, if they

carried a trace of the actual words uttered, for he proceeded with his roll-call without further interruption.

When the lieutenant left the room one of his comrades said:

“Chew, where did you get it all?”

“Jis’ had one drink,” replied Chew.

“Then you must have tapped a still-house,” said Ed. O’Brien, and he sung—

“The man that has good whiskey
And giveth his neighbor none,
Sha’n’t have any of my good whiskey
When his good whiskey is gone.”

“When—

“Now, altogether”—(and all took up the refrain):

“When his good whiskey is gone.”

There was one little incident during Chew’s sojourn in the Old Capitol which proved that the course of love does run smoothly sometimes—even love of whiskey. Chew was very thirsty, and was determined to quench that thirst. At “Sick Call,” he joined the throng who wended their way to the hospital.

“Oh, I’m so sick. I got sick cramps. Bin sick all night,” said Chew, as he entered the hospital, with one hand clutching a portion of his garments covering the part of his anatomy where cramps are supposed to locate, and the other pressed against his forehead.

“I’ll give you a dose of castor oil,” said the hospital steward.

“Oh,” said Chew, “I kaint take castoh oil. Nevah could take it.”

“I’ll fix it up so you won’t taste it.”

"It's no use, I know. You'll hav'ter give me somethin' else."

The steward poured a little whiskey in the bottom of a glass; then poured in the oil, which was quite stiff, and after that put whiskey on top. Chew took the glass and with a quick toss gulped down the whiskey before the oil had fairly started to flow, and handed the glass back, saying: "Take it quick. I'm afeerd I'll throw it up"—at the same time making such grimaces that one would think he really had swallowed a nauseous dose.

"You haven't taken any of the oil," said the steward. "Here; drink it down."

"Oh, I got a big mouthful, an' I'm pow'ful sick."

"I'll put some more whiskey on top. Drink it quick and you won't taste it."

"I did drink it jis' ez quick ez I could. I'll try, but I know it won't stay down."

Taking the glass he tossed off the whiskey from the top, as before, and leaving the oil. The steward, now seeing through the trick, said: "You can take that now as it is, for I will not put another drop of whiskey in it."

"Well," said Chew, as he moved toward the door, "I dun told ye I couldn't take castoh oil. I nevah could take it. I drink't it quick ez I could. I kin take mos' ennything better'n castoh oil." He came back to his room where he told of the success of his scheme to his laughing companions.

Saturday, March 14.—Last night we got the daily papers—the first for several days. In the kitchen the cooks were at work nearly all night to have the rations ready for to-day. It was reported that the

prisoners would leave about ten o'clock in the morning. All day the streets were filled with people eager for a glance at the Rebels. About 2 P.M., orders came to pack up, and about 4 P.M., they left the prison. Seventeen were taken from Room 16. Guards were placed in line along the sidewalks and in the Capitol grounds to keep back the crowd who had assembled to witness the departure. There were ambulances for the old, infirm, sick and wounded. The soldiers expected to leave to-day, but were left behind, with the exception of a few of the wounded.

Sunday, March 15.—It seems lonely to-day on account of the change—we miss so many familiar faces. It seems like a break in the family. Six more prisoners were put in our room, making twenty-one in all. There are two cases of smallpox in the next room.

Monday, March 16.—This morning the prisoners from Room 14, were crowded into our room while that room was being cleaned and whitewashed. There are twenty-one of them—some are broken out with smallpox.

Tuesday, March 17.—The men having smallpox, who were put in our room yesterday from Room 14 were to-day put in Room 18. If they are changed around a few more times the disease will be pretty well spread.

Two men, father and son, just brought in, were captured in a raid on the Potomac River. They are citizens. Their families are left without support or protection. The wife of one about being confined. Both men agreed to take the oath, but were told that as they would do so only on account of their situation they would not be released.

Volney Purcell, of Loudoun County, Virginia, was called to-day. Colonel Buell asked him what charges were against him. He replied he did not know. Purcell then asked Colonel Buell if *he* knew. Buell said he did not; there was nothing that he could see. Purcell then said: "Can you not release me, then?" "No," said Buell, "I cannot." Purcell said he thought it very strange that he should be brought from his home and kept here without any charge. Buell said it was strange, but his case would have to go before the Commission.

The prison yard is now in a very filthy condition. In rainy weather a great part of the space allowed the prisoners for exercise is covered with mud.

Wednesday, March 18.—I was called to-day by Colonel Buell. After questioning me regarding my arrest and imprisonment, he asked if I would take the oath.

"No, sir," said I.

"What," said he, "not willing to take the oath. I will acknowledge that my sympathies were enlisted in your behalf, but your refusal to take the oath puts an entirely different face on the matter. Had you told me that at first it might have saved this examination. In fact, you need not have left your room."

"What charges are against me?" I asked. "If there are any, let me have a fair trial, as is my right, and if I am found guilty I am willing to suffer punishment, but if there are none you have no right to keep me here."

"You have a very exalted opinion of the leniency of this Government, to think that after having been South

you could be permitted to come back here and live without taking the oath."

"No, sir," said I, "I have no reason to have a very exalted opinion of the leniency of this Government. I had a right to go where I pleased before the blockade was established, and afterward had a right to come to my home where I belonged. I would not take that oath if it were offered to me at the South, and I do not see how any man can honestly take it with the intention of keeping it—to 'support, protect and defend a government or administration, *now and hereafter, under any and all circumstances.*' How do I know what may be done hereafter?"

"I have taken that oath," said Colonel Buell.

"That may be," said I; "your views and mine differ on the subject of right and wrong."

"Go back to your room, sir," said Buell, and that terminated the interview.

Thursday, March 19.—An officer came up to-day with a paper and called over the names of seven in our room (Room 16)—Holbrook, Barnes, Littlepage, Keleher, Hoyle, Simmons and myself, and at night we were removed to Room 10. With the three prisoners already in the room there are ten of us now in a small room with two bunks and three small beds. Room 10 is on the north side of the building, third story, first window from the corner on First Street.

Friday, March 20.—The prisoners brought in numbered twenty-five instead of seventy-five as reported in the daily papers, where it is stated that they were taken in a fight with Stuart's Cavalry, and that nothing but the saber was used. The prisoners say the Federals had artillery and used it.

Sunday, March 22.—Two elderly ladies, with a small child, were brought in from the street for saluting prisoners.

The prison officials are taking the names of soldiers to-day preparatory to exchange.

Monday, March 23.—It is said that the private soldiers will be sent off to-morrow. The officers will not go.

One of the prison guards, named Highland, who has always acted very kindly toward the prisoners while on post, and has made many friends among them, told me that two young ladies have been brought in and are now confined in Duff Green's Row (Carroll Prison). He does not know who they are or what charges are against them. I understand a number of citizens from the neighborhood of Fairfax Court House have been arrested and brought in since Mosby's raid and capture of General Stoughton, and these ladies may be of that number.*

Tuesday, March 24.—I have been suffering from severe cold for several days. Our room is small, close and ill-ventilated, and here we are kept penned up, with the exception of the time we are allowed out at meal times. Then we are out in a damp yard, which is so crowded when there is a large number of prisoners here (as at the present time,) that there is little room for comfortable exercise. In this yard we stand for about a half hour, consequently nearly all of us are troubled with colds.

The prisoners booked for exchange are here yet, and it is hard to say when they will leave. It is reported

* See page 115.

that a number of prisoners are expected from Camp Chase or some other place, and that is a reason given for the delay.

Wednesday, March 25.—At night, a short time before roll-call, the clerk came up and inquired if all in the room were "State" prisoners. Receiving an affirmative reply, he asked who wanted to go to Dixie. Simmons, Barnes and myself answered "Here."

OFF FOR DIXIE

Thursday, March 26.—Could not sleep last night. Got up about twelve or one o'clock, took a smoke and then lay down until near daylight. I then got up and went down to the prison yard. I understand a batch of prisoners were brought in about eleven o'clock last night. I heard a great tramping of feet at that time.

At three o'clock in the afternoon, all who expected to go to Richmond were called down in the yard and the roll called by Superintendent Wood. When he came to my name he asked where I was taken.

I said "Here, in Washington."

"What were you doing?"

"At the store, attending to my business."

"Stand back. You can't go."

I went back to my room, giving up the idea of getting away then. Some things I had sent for had not arrived, so I was disappointed in more than one respect, and was about settling myself down, when Adamson called out to me—"Get your things and come on." I hurried down, and when I passed out the prisoners were in front of Duff Green's Row. Littlepage, Keleher, Holbrook and Hoyle, poor fellows, looked lonely enough when we left them.

After receiving the prisoners from Carroll Prison, the cavalcade moved on past the Capitol and through the streets, to the foot of Sixth Street, where a crowd of ladies were waiting and bade us adieu, waving their handkerchiefs in spite of all protests from the guards.

who at last drove them from the wharf at the point of the bayonet.

We were then put on board the flag-of-truce boat, the steamer *State of Maine*, and left the city at night. About seven or eight o'clock, bread, crackers and cheese were given out to the prisoners—some got a good share, while others were served with three soda crackers each. This was the first food given us since breakfast in the Old Capitol. In the effort to get the prisoners off we failed to get any dinner, although we left the prison fully three or four hours after the regular dinner hour.

Six of us secured three staterooms by paying \$1, each for the trip. Here we were very comfortable, with good berths, etc. Many who were not so fortunate had to sleep on the floor or on trunks, boxes, or anything they could find handy.

It was an agreeable change when we were once on board the steamer. To be where no guards with bristling bayonets were continually meeting you to remind you that you were a prisoner. Where no sentinel challenged you at every turn. With no one calling after you if you made a false move or deviated in the slightest from prison discipline.

Friday, March 27.—Awoke about eight or nine o'clock this morning—our boat was steaming down the Potomac River, Westmoreland County, Virginia, on the one side, and St. Mary's County, Maryland, on the other. Breakfast was over, but Wright brought me some bread and sausage. In the rush for dinner I had my coat-tail torn off and was pretty well shaken up.

This afternoon we anchored off Fortress Monroe.

At night half a dozen prisoners were brought over to the steamer from the fortress. They have been at the fort for a week. They are from the West—some Morgan's men.

I saw Captain Darling making a bed for himself on a hard bench and invited him to share my stateroom, which he did. He said he had a very high opinion of the patriotism of the citizens of Washington, particularly the ladies, and spoke with warmth of the parting scene at the wharf, where the Federal guards brought their guns to a charge on the ladies and drove them off.

Saturday, March 28.—Awoke about seven o'clock. Still at anchor between Fortress Monroe and the Rip Raps. Two English war ships anchored off in the Roads. Many of our company are complaining of seasickness. I felt a little dizzy and weak before breakfast, but went below and got a cup of coffee, a slice of bread and a piece of fat pork. After eating this I felt better. Sea quite high for some time. A heavy rain storm came up about ten o'clock, with thunder and lightning. The water then became calmer but the rain continued.

At 12:45 the captain came over from Fortress Monroe and we started from the anchorage in the midst of a heavy rain. The guard here left us, good-naturedly bidding us good-bye and hoping to meet us soon in more peaceful times. They were of Company K, Third New York Regiment, and were on the best of terms with us during the trip.

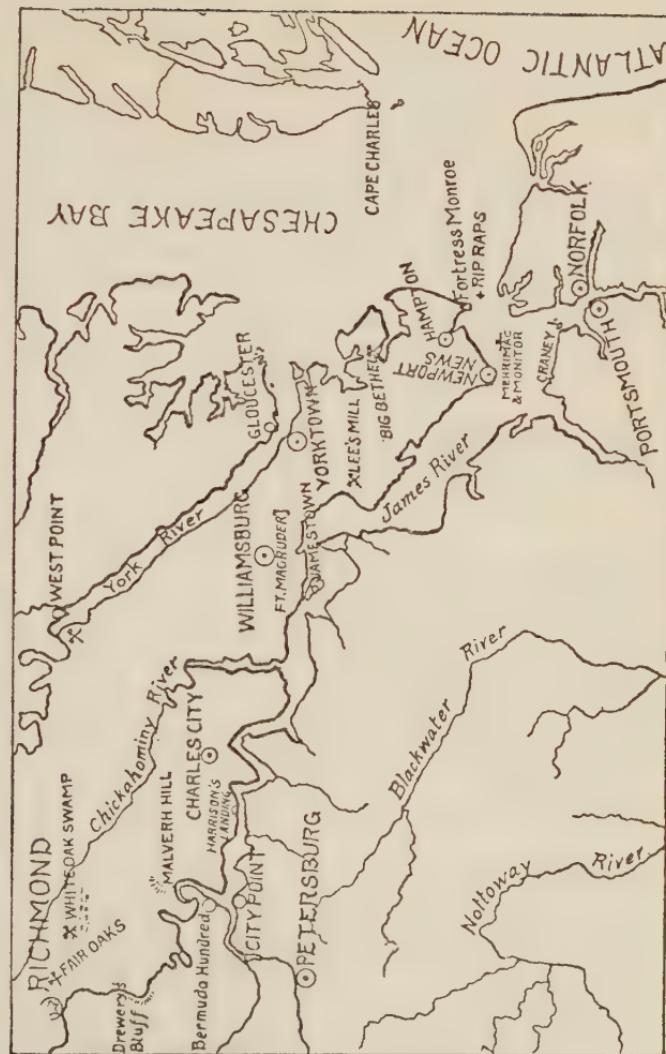
When opposite Newport News, saw the wrecks of the United States frigates *Cumberland* and *Congress*, sunk in the fight with the Confederate ironclad *Vir-*

ginia (*Merrimac*),* on the 8th of March, 1862. A portion of one mast only of the *Congress* being visible, while we could see parts of three masts of the *Cumberland* and a part of the bowsprit above the water. They were but a short distance from the shore, off the point. A little beyond we saw the United States steamer *Minnesota* and two other vessels, ironclads, and a little farther off the *Monitor* lay floating at ease.

Hundreds of sea-gulls hovered around our boat, circling overhead, occasionally stopping in their flight and beating the air with their wings, then floating along like a boat on smooth water, darting down now and then, attracted by the pieces of bread and scraps of food thrown into the water by the men on board, all the while uttering a peculiar cry resembling the creaking of an old wagon wheel in need of oiling. A man on the lower deck threw a piece of coal into the flock which struck one of the birds, apparently breaking a wing, as it fell over into the water, helpless. The rest of the flock ceased following us and gathered round their wounded companion, who lay on top of the water. They fluttered around him, chattering and seemingly endeavoring to aid or save him. Soon, however, they again gathered around us and seemed to forget their loss in their efforts to catch the tempting morsels thrown to them from the boat.

How rudely cut off from life. How soon forgotten, poor bird. But how like man the conduct of these

*The Confederate ironclad *Virginia* (*Merrimac*) was abandoned and blown up off Craney Island, Virginia, on the 11th of May, 1862, after the evacuation of Norfolk by the Confederate forces.



MAP OF JAMES RIVER
From Fortress Monroe to Richmond

birds. A poor mortal is stricken down in the midst of his cares and his enjoyments. Friends and relatives cluster about him and pour forth their lamentations. But how soon does their grief wear off, and they are carried away in the whirl of excitement of the giddy, thoughtless world, and all is forgotten.

A guard-boat hailed us, and the captain in reply said that we were going to City Point with five hundred Confederate prisoners, for exchange. "All right," was the answer from the guard-boat. Two hundred and forty prisoners were brought to the Old Capitol the night before we left, and we left there with four hundred and eighty-eight.

I lay down and took a nap in the afternoon. When I awoke the rain had ceased, but the clouds hung lowering overhead and the muttering thunder was sullenly giving out angry growls.

We were then in the James River, and passing in sight of Jamestown, the first settlement in Virginia. There are no houses on the island. The brick walls of one of the old houses and chimneys of two out-houses are in sight. These were destroyed by the Union troops. We could also see the remains of the batteries erected by the Confederates. An old church tower is all that remains of a church built in Colonial times.

A colored boy came to our stateroom and said if we wished to keep it we should come down to the clerk's office and re-engage it. Wright said he would like to keep it, but had no money. I sent down a bill and paid for the room for the night. After sundown it cleared off beautifully, and the sky was bright and clear. Our boat anchored in mid-stream, with a white

flag at the fore and the United States flag flying at the peak.

Sunday, March 29.—When I awoke this morning the boat was steaming up the James River, a little below the mouth of the Chickahominy River. We soon came to Westover, originally the residence of Colonel William Byrd, who was in his day one of the most accomplished gentlemen in the Colony, and Westover was noted for the magnificence of the buildings, the beauty of the situation and the charms of its society. Next came Harrison's Landing, a place made memorable by the retreat of McClellan's army from before Richmond, after the seven days' fight. From this point it was but a short run to City Point, where we cast anchor in the stream opposite the landing.

Here we were gladdened by the sight of a small Confederate flag waving from a house on a bluff opposite, and at the landing a sentinel in Confederate gray paced up and down. A few soldiers appeared on a hill near by, and some distance above City Point we could see flags waving—first white and then red. This was a signal station. One of our men had been in the Signal Service and he explained its workings to us. Captain John E. Mulford, United States Agent of Exchange, went ashore in a boat and soon after returned and said the Confederate authorities had been notified of our arrival and we would be sent off as soon as they came down for us.

Last night there were no rations given out, and this morning we got nothing but a piece of fat pork and a slice of bread—no coffee. Meals were served up on the boat at 50 cents a head.

About 4 P.M. the anchor was hauled up and two

hundred and eighty-five soldiers, including those from the Old Capitol, and a portion of the soldiers from Johnson's Island, were landed at the wharf. Cars were in readiness to take them to Petersburg. They went off in high spirits, all apparently rejoiced to find themselves again free.



J. H. Barnes.

City Point is at the confluence of the James and Appomattox Rivers. The railroad runs along the shore and the land rises abruptly a short distance back from the river bank, forming in many places high bluffs. The wharves, which extended along the whole front of the town, have been destroyed, and nothing remains of them but the charred tops of the piles which supported them. The

houses along the shore in front of the steep banks, are all more or less injured and many completely demolished. Great holes are seen through the sides and roofs, made by shot and shell.

At night saw signal station on James River in full operation. Flags are used by day and lights at night.

Monday, March 30.—Barnes asked Captain Mulford if citizens, after being exchanged, could return to their homes within the Federal lines without being subject to arrest. Captain Mulford said the same charge which led to their arrest in the first instance could be again brought against them, and he said he would advise all who were exchanged to keep outside of the lines, unless they came with Morgan, Stuart, or some one who could take them back safely.

About one o'clock a train came down from Petersburg, with the Confederate States Commissioner of Exchange, Robert Ould. Soon the United States steamer *Henry Burden* came up with a flag of truce, and made fast alongside. She brought Colonel Ludlow, United States Commissioner. About 4:45 we were put on the cars and taken to Petersburg.

PAROLE CAMP

Arriving at Petersburg, we were marched through the city to Parole Camp, at Model Farm Barracks. Here we went to headquarters and registered our names. Bennett took me to his quarters and gave me some supper—bacon and crackers. On the boat we had nothing but bread and coffee toward the last, and the meat was quite a luxury. It was of good quality, too.

Tuesday, March 31.—When I awoke this morning I had to turn over two or three times to supple my joints. The bunk I slept in was hard boards, and our covering for the two was a small shawl and one over-coat. It was a cold, rainy night and my bed cold. Still, I am satisfied to put up with this lack of comfort to be out of prison and among friends once more. I saw James F. Kerfoot, a room-mate from the Old Capitol. Crowds of negroes flock around the camp with pies, bread and fried chicken, etc. If you ask the price of anything they will answer—"A dollar." Four pies, \$1, and everything in dollar parcels, as though that was the lowest current value known in ordinary traffic.

Parole Camp is located at what was formerly an Agricultural Fair Ground. Here twelve of us are quartered in one end of an old stable. We drew our rations—rice, sugar, salt, bacon and three biscuits each. We put one of these big round biscuits or crackers in a little tin plate, heat some water in a skillet

and pour over the biscuit, then turn another tin plate over it and leave for a few minutes. On removing the upper tin plate the biscuit will be found to have swelled out so that it fills the plate. A piece of fat pork or bacon is now put in the skillet, and when the fat is well fried out the biscuit is put in the hot fat and placed over the fire, and to a hungry man living



Albert Wrenn

in the open air it is a first-class luxury on a bill of fare, where the great fault is that, like Sam Weller's love letter, it is too short, and makes you wish there was more of it. The supply of wood is light—rations only five or six sticks.

Jack Barnes, Albert Wrenn and Frank Fox went to Petersburg on an old pass and came back at night,

bringing with them a canteen of whiskey, for which they paid \$6.50 per quart.

We have only two bunks in our quarters. While we take turns with these the rest of the party have to sleep on the floor or sit up around the fire. The building is open to the wind, and so cold that it is impossible to sleep comfortably.

At Parole Camp I see a great many prisoners who have been incarcerated in Northern prisons, principally Camp Chase, Camp Douglas and Johnson's Island. They all corroborate the statements made to me by the Western prisoners with whom I conversed while in the Old Capitol, regarding the treatment of prisoners.

I was speaking to one of my companions who was complaining of the short rations and cold comforts at Camp Parole, when one of the released prisoners who had but recently arrived, said:

"You should not complain of the fare and treatment here. It is nothing compared to what we had to go through on Johnson's Island. Of course it is hard living here, but we know it can't be helped; there was no excuse for it there. What we suffered there was from pure cussedness. The Yankees have plenty of everything and could certainly give prisoners enough to eat if they chose—plain, cheap food—enough to sustain life in a healthy condition, but they didn't. Some prisoners would eat their day's rations at one meal; others would make two meals of it. Salt beef, salt pork, salt fish and bread was doled out to us for months; no coffee, tea or sugar; no vegetables, except very rarely an onion or potato. Consequently, men suffered with scurvy so that their gums were bleeding

and sometimes their teeth fell out. Old bones were broken up and boiled, and scraps of food were culled out from the hospital slop-barrels. Rats and cats were eaten by the hungry men when they could catch them. For a time prisoners were allowed to receive food from friends outside, but an order was published denying them this privilege.

"For trifling offences Confederate officers were compelled to stand on the head of a barrel between the dead-line and the prison wall, and one officer while standing in the door of Block 12 was killed by a sentinel. It was not unusual for our quarters to be fired into at night.

"The place being exposed to the cold wintry winds from Lake Erie we suffered from the intense cold, and in summer the only shade was that afforded by the buildings where the prisoners were housed."*

Thursday, April 2.—The soldiers here have to endure greater hardships than we do. Last night they were coughing continually in the barracks adjoining the quarters I am in. One poor fellow, suffering with neuralgia, was walking up and down the floor, groaning and acting like a crazy man. At last, losing his patience completely, he commenced to swear. A comrade, shocked at his utterances, said:

*In the official records, War of the Rebellion, reports of surgeons and medical directors to the Commissary-General of Prisoners verifies the statements made by the Confederate prisoners as to the wanton shooting of prisoners, the prevalence of scurvy and great number of deaths from same, and to the unnecessary sufferings of prisoners from causes which could be remedied.

"Bill, why don't you pray to God to help you, instead of cursing and going on as you are?"

"Oh," replied Bill, "I have done that, but d——n it, He won't do it."

Captain Cannon told Bowles yesterday that he had written to Colonel French the day before, to know what he should do with the citizens brought here. This should have been provided for in advance of their arrival. There seems to be very poor management on the part of the officials in charge.

Yesterday we got a ration of flour and half a ration of bacon—quarter of a pound to each man.

This afternoon nine hundred men arrived from Camp Chase. There is now a general exchange going on, and it is said about six thousand prisoners are to be brought on. A number were sent off to-day. They go to the Western army. Wind blowing very hard. Frank Fox, Phil. Lee, and the two Mills sick. Militia relieved from guard duty.

Barnes yesterday appointed sergeant of our company. This morning some of our mess bought a bottle of brandy and half a gallon of beans. I had a good drink of the brandy, and it put a little warmth in me. Beans for dinner—the first good hearty meal since we left the Old Capitol.

We borrowed a big iron kettle from one of the messes, and having gathered a lot of wood and chips, started a fire and put our beans on to cook. One of the men picked up a piece of an old cracker box and we made a number of rude paddles to use as spoons in eating the beans. Tom Lee was walking around seemingly unconscious of what was going on. "Don't say anything to Tom about what we are doing," said

one. Tom wandered off, and when he returned the beans were ready for eating.

"How are you going to eat the beans—with your fingers?" asked Tom as he saw us seat ourselves around the pot.

All smiled at his innocence, and taking out their paddles commenced fishing for beans. Tom quietly took from his pocket a clam shell he had found in his wanderings and fitted it into a split stick. With this primitive but all-sufficient implement he proceeded to dip into the pot, and while the beans were slipping off our rudely fashioned paddles he could scoop up at one dip as much as we could take at a dozen.

"You boys are smart," said Tom, "but you couldn't fool your brother Tom."

Saturday, April 4.—Got a pass to visit Petersburg in company with Jack Barnes, Gus Williams and Tom Lee.

Our rations are dealt out in such homeopathic doses that we are always glad when we can obtain a pass to visit Petersburg so as to gratify a little of that craving for food which it is impossible to satisfy here.

Went through the market. Meat selling at \$1 a pound; turnips, 25 cents each, and other vegetables in proportion. Bought a hat, \$20; had a drink of apple brandy, 50 cents. Walked up along the Appomattox River, and came back into camp through the old Fair Grounds. Rain and cold wind; nearly all the tents blown down.

Sunday, April 5.—Still raining. Captain Cannon said a dispatch had been received from the Secretary of War, that all civilians not attached to regular commands and liable to conscription, would have the priv-

ilege of joining any command they chose. I told Cannon I was a Marylander and that I would like to go to Richmond before making choice. He said I must first designate a command I wished to join. Told him then I would join Captain Mosby. He said I would be mustered in and leave as soon as possible.

Tuesday, April 7.—Went to Petersburg with Barnes, Wrenn and Biggins. Got plate of ham and eggs (two eggs and a piece of bacon), \$1.25.

George Richardson, Gus Williams, Cooke, J. Mills and Benjamin F. Bowles left camp and went to Richmond. Williams, in bidding us good-bye, said he expected to be back in the Old Capitol within a week after leaving Richmond. He said this was the fourth time he had been a prisoner; that his two daughters and one son, about ten or twelve years of age, were arrested at the instigation of Union men and imprisoned three months.

Some of the Confederate officers from the Old Capitol Prison came down last night and reported at camp this morning: Captain Sherman, Major Breckinridge, Lieutenants Smith, Bixler and others. William M. Mills leaves camp to-morrow.

Thursday, April 9.—One of the prisoners from Camp Douglas told me that there was great mortality among the Confederate prisoners there. A large number were in the hospital, and the morning he left there were thirty corpses in the dead house. "It is no wonder they die off," said he; "hundreds were frost-bitten and suffered terribly from the cold last winter. Fuel was given out so sparingly, that we had to treasure every little piece of wood and coal as if it was precious metal we were hoarding. Our rations

were cut down so that we were never able to satisfy the craving of hunger. So long as we were allowed to receive food from benevolent persons outside of the prison some of the prisoners fared tolerably well, but when the order came prohibiting this we really suffered. Many poor fellows, broken down and emaciated by disease, passed away in the silence of the night and their companions in misery were in ignorance of the fact until the dawning of day exposed to their view the pale corpse in their midst.

"Our barracks were miserable, dilapidated buildings, and our prison guards were brutal in the extreme; they had never been to the front, nor within sight or sound of a battle. Kicks and curses were liberally dealt out, and prisoners were shot without any real provocation. Men were hung up by the thumbs until they fainted. One half-starved prisoner was shot while fishing bones out of a slop-barrel."

Sunday, April 12.—Fine day. Yesterday I was passed out by Lieutenant Smith. Gathered some broom-sage and made a bed of it, so I slept more comfortably last night. Heavy cannonading heard yesterday.

About four o'clock this afternoon I was regularly mustered into the Confederate service, to serve under Mosby, now operating in the borderland of Virginia.

Lindsay, of Washington, went to Richmond, to be sent to Company K, Tenth Louisiana Regiment.

There have been so many prisoners brought here to Camp Parole lately that we are getting overcrowded. Coming from the prison pens of Camp Chase, Camp Douglas, Johnson's Island, and other Northern prisons, where they have been confined for months, they are all more or less infested with vermin. It is a common

sight to see an old soldier quietly seat himself in a line of unfortunates, on the sunny side of a fence or building sheltered from the cold wind, and deliberately drawing his shirt over his head, set to work industriously searching for vampires—picking them out from their hiding places in the folds and creases.



COLONEL JOHN SINGLETON MOSBY, C. S. A.

Skirmishing, the boys term this occupation, though it might be called picketing. To kill the tiny creatures who seek to conceal themselves along the seams of the pants, and to destroy the eggs, two round stones are taken in the hands, and by clapping them together up and down the seams on the side of the legs of the pants the life is crushed out of a goodly number of the bloodthirsty crew.

Expecting now to leave the camp in a lay or two,

we—that is, our mess (and we certainly were a sorry mess)—went up the Appomattox to Elk Licking Creek and took a bath. We had gotten so stocked up with vermin, that the only way we could see to rid ourselves of the pest was to buy new outfits in Petersburg and go to the Creek, take a good scrubbing, throw away all our old clothes and put on the new ones.

Monday, April 13.—William McK. Perry, who was a room-mate in the Old Capitol Prison, sent there from Camp Chase, left Parole Camp to-day for his home in Missouri.

FROM PAROLE CAMP TO UPPERVILLE

Tuesday, April 14.—Left Model Farm Barracks, Camp Parole, in company with John H. Barnes, Albert Wrenn, Frank Fox, Philip and Thomas Lee, and Charles W. Radcliffe.* About 4 o'clock left Petersburg for Richmond, where we arrived at 6:30 P.M. Along the road to Richmond are lines of rifle pits and intrenchments commanding the approaches to the city. When we reached the outposts at Richmond we were challenged by a guard, and after showing our papers, were permitted to proceed to the hotel. We put up at the Powhatan House, corner of Eleventh

* John H. Barnes joined Mosby, and while scouting with Lieutenant Williams and a few men was captured, taken to Washington and put in the Old Capitol Prison; was tried by court-martial and sentenced to be shot. This sentence was commuted to imprisonment in penitentiary for twenty years. He was afterward released, but was so broken down that he died soon after his release.

Frank Fox joined Mosby; was elected second lieutenant of Company C; was especially mentioned for conspicuous gallantry in Colonel Mosby's report of fight with Cole's Battalion, February 21, 1864; was mortally wounded September 3, 1864, in fight with Sixth New York Cavalry, taken prisoner, and died some days after at Sandy Hook, Md.

Albert Wrenn joined Mosby; was elected second lieutenant of Company B, October 1, 1863; wounded and horse killed at Berryville, August 13, 1864; died Washington, D. C., November 6, 1910, and buried at Chantilly, November 8, 1910.

Philip Lee also joined Mosby.

and Broad Streets. Our supper consisted of tough beef, bread and rye coffee—no butter.

Wednesday, April 15.—Settled my bill at the Powhatan, \$8. Terms: \$8 per day; \$2 each for breakfast and supper; \$3 for dinner; \$2 for lodging.

Beef is selling in Richmond at \$1.25 per pound; butter, \$3; coffee, \$4 to \$5; eggs, \$1.50 per dozen. Ex-



LIEUTENANT FRANK FOX

pected to go to the transportation office at night, but went to the theater and then back to the hotel.

Thursday, April 16.—At 7:30 left Richmond and arrived at Gordonsville at 1 P.M.; stopped at Mann's Hotel. Gordonsville is a miserable looking place now. There has been so much rain lately, and the roads have been cut up with the travel and passing of army teams and trains, so that it is little else than a mud-hole.

Saturday, April 18.—Paid Mann's bill, \$7.50. There are but six of us now, as Frank Fox left us and remained at Barboursville. MacWooster hitched up a wagon, agreeing to take us to Madison Court House for \$5 each. We reached Madison Court House about dark and went to a hotel kept by Mr. Seal. Here we were very comfortable—good beds and an excellent table.

Sunday, April 19.—Madison Court House is a very pretty little place, well situated, and commanding a beautiful view of the Blue Ridge and surrounding country. There are two or three churches and a fine court house. The houses are neat and comfortable. After dinner paid Mr. Seal. Our bill for supper, breakfast and dinner, was \$4.50.

MacWooster said he would carry us as far as Criglersville, about six miles distant, and there leave us to foot it. The drive along the road was very pleasant, particularly after striking Robertson River, a beautiful clear stream with a swift current, which comes down from the mountains.

“Now, boys,” said Mac, as he bid us good-bye at a ford on the Robertson River, “you've got a rough road before you, and a poor country to travel through. Take my advice and stop for the night at Matt. Graves's. His house is near the foot of the mountain. He is one of the finest men in the country. He will treat you well and give you the best he has in his house.” We afterward found good reason to be thankful for having taken this friendly advice.

When we reached the house which we supposed was to be our haven of rest, we saw a man riding up to the stable, and on accosting him found he was Mr. Graves.

He invited us to his house, where he regaled us with a good drink and a bottle for our day's journey on the morrow. This he said we would find needful before we got far on our road, for he not only repeated MacWooster's warning as to the hardships awaiting us, but also said he feared the weather would prove unfavorable and add to our discomfort.

Monday, April 20.—At Mr. Graves's there is a little fellow about the size, age and appearance of my youngest son, Bernardin. Seeing him playing around and fondling on his father it brought to mind thoughts of home—thoughts of home and its comforts; of the dear ones there; of the sad hearts I left, and of the glad hearts to greet me on my return. I could hardly resist the temptation to pick up the little one without saying a word, but I feared he would cry, so I made friends with him by showing him a ring on my finger, and so coaxed him on until I had banished any fears he might have. All the time I was there I could scarcely keep my eyes off him.

Paid Mr. Graves \$2 each for supper, bed and breakfast, and started to cross the mountain at Milani's Gap. We were told it was ten miles from Mr. Graves's to the top of the ridge and six miles to the foot on the other side. Rain set in last night and this morning the clouds are very heavy, enveloping the mountains completely. The road takes a zigzag course up the slope, which is quite steep in many places. A great portion of the way we followed along the Robertson River. The scenery, as well as we could see it through the mist, appeared grand. It was mountains piled on mountains—an ocean of ridges. In some places we could travel for a long distance and then throw a stone

to the place we started from. A number of huts are scattered through this mountain region, but the people are almost as wild as Indians, and it was impossible to obtain refreshments of any kind along the road.

When about four miles from the top rain again set in, and we tramped along through the driving storm. In some places, endeavoring to save distance, we would leave the main road and climb up the steep sides until we struck into the road at some point higher up. We had to ford the swift mountain streams, or cross on an old log or fallen tree, where, as also in clambering along the narrow footpath, a false step, the turning of a stone or the breaking of a limb, and one would have been precipitated into the foaming current which dashed on among the rocks. In those mountain storms a tiny stream which winds along like a silvery thread in fair weather, is in less than an hour transformed into a raging torrent, sweeping off everything in its course.

On nearing the top we fell in with a man who was traveling through the country buying up cattle and forage for the Confederate Government. He kept in company with us until we reached Marksville. Hearing a noise which sounded like the rumbling of a wagon train coming down the road, we listened and finally concluded it either proceeded from a subterranean stream which flowed through the mountains or that roaring which usually precedes a mountain storm.

Seeing a hut near the roadside, we stopped, and a youth came out to the fence, followed by a squad of unkempt redheaded children. We asked if we could get anything to eat. He had nothing. Seeing some

chickens roaming around, Barnes said he would give him \$1.50 for a dozen eggs. He replied that he had none; no meal—nothing edible, and it was a half mile to the top of the mountain.

We passed through Dismal Hollow, a wild, romantic-looking place. The road was sometimes hidden by the overhanging foliage. We saw the snow piled up on the side of the road and through the hemlock thickets, where it remains far into the summer. On reaching the top of the mountain we uncorked our bottle and drank that the Yankees might never cross the Blue Ridge.

Then commenced our descent, and it is hard to say whether it was easier to go up or down hill. Had it not been for the rain our traveling would have been less difficult. After getting to the foot we proceeded on until we came to the house of a man named Kite. He had a fine house and farm, but refused to accommodate us. He said he was eaten out and had not enough for his own family. We jogged on through the rain until we reached Marksville, on the Hawksbill Creek, where we stopped a few minutes to rest, and then walked along until within about four miles of Luray.

We inquired at every house along the road, but could neither get a mouthful to eat nor a place to shelter us from the rain, though we told them all we were not asking charity, but were willing to pay liberally for all we received. After so many rebuffs we were about giving up the attempt to get food or shelter, when Barnes and Wren stopped at the house of Reuben Long. He said he would take three of us and the other three could get accommodated at the next house

—a Mr. Spitter. We tried there and he had a sick family. We then went to the house of Ambrose Varner, who received us kindly, built a big fire to warm us and dry our wet clothes, and prepared a good substantial supper for us. Charles Ratcliffe had become disgusted with our receptions and made arrangements to build a fire and pass the night in an old shanty, while a negro was to furnish bread and meat for his supper. He afterward came to Varner's, where we spent the night.

Tuesday, April 21.—After a good breakfast we prepared for a start. On asking what our bill was, Mr. Varner said he would make no charge, but if we chose to give his wife anything for her trouble, he would leave it altogether with us. We gave him \$2 each, and he put up a nice lunch to take along with us. We called at Long's, where Barnes and Wrenn joined us, and then pushed on to Luray. Yesterday we walked a little more than twenty-one miles across the mountains, through mud and rain.

At Luray, while Barnes and Wrenn stopped at Modisett's Hotel for dinner, I went in search of a druggist, as I had been unwell for several days. He gave me some powders. I took one, which made me very sick. I lay down for a while, but felt no better, and we started off on the road to Front Royal. Along the road I was burning with fever—my head so dizzy that I staggered like a person drunk. I had an excessive thirst and drank at every spring or stream we came to, but even water would not remain on my stomach—soon after drinking I would be taken with vomiting. After going about six miles we turned off from the road into a lane, and thence to the house of

Mr. Hoffman, where we obtained supper, bed and breakfast. The good lady of the house made me a cup of tea, which I drank, but could eat no supper. Went to bed early, and after I got in bed Mr. Hoffman brought me a glass of toddy.

Wednesday, April 22.—Felt somewhat better this morning; got breakfast. Settled bill, \$1 each. Mr. Hoffman brought us a plate of biscuits to carry along and we started for Front Royal. We met parties along the route, each with a different story to tell about the approach of the Yankees. Some said they were in force at Middletown, about 12 miles from Front Royal. Others, that they were expected in Front Royal at any moment, and advising us not to stop there. Indeed, had we heeded half the reports we would have retraced our steps.

A few miles from Front Royal we met a carriage going toward Luray. In it was a young man in Confederate uniform and two young ladies. Barnes spoke to them and one immediately recognized him. She was Miss Belle Ford, a cousin to Miss Antonia Ford, who was arrested and confined in the Old Capitol Prison after Mosby's raid into Fairfax Court House and capture of General Stoughton, charged with giving Mosby information which led to the raid and capture.* After leaving them we proceeded about another mile, when we were halted by a patrol of Confederate Cavalry, who demanded to know where we were from, where we were going, etc. One of them said he had seen the Yankees at Middletown—cavalry, infantry and artillery—and cautioned us about stopping

* See page 154.

at Front Royal. Our road ran a great distance along the Shenandoah River. On the one side we had the river banks, and on the other towering rocks and rugged mountains. In some places there was a gradual slope, while in others they rose perpendicular, forming a complete wall, but without its uniformity—massive



BRIGADIER-GENERAL EDWIN H. STOUGHTON, U. S. A.

and broken, showing occasionally large fissures which, viewed from the ground, resembled windows.

On reaching Front Royal we went to the hotel. There are two in town, but only one occupied. Here a very nice supper was set out for us, but I was content with a dish of boiled milk. There were but two beds in the house, and as there were six of us we slept three in a bed.

Thursday, April 23.—Good breakfast this morning.

It was raining very hard when we started on toward Markham. Our route led us down the old Manassas Railroad. The track had been torn up, the sleepers and all woodwork burnt, the rails bent and in many cases twisted around the trunks of trees. The road in some places was so muddy we sunk five or six inches at every step, and in other places we were slipping over sharp broken stones. Finding the road so bad, our clothing completely saturated with rain, and there being no appearance of the rain ceasing, we halted by the roadside at an old deserted shanty, which had at one time been occupied by workmen on the railroad. We gathered some wood, built a fire and tried to make ourselves as comfortable as possible. We bought seven pounds of flour from an old Irishman living near by, but could get neither meat nor eggs. The man baked us some bread and with it brought us a pot of coffee. At night slept on a bunch of wet straw thrown on the floor of the shanty—that is, on the place where the flooring should be, but in this instance it was dirt, the same as outside, except that it was sheltered from the rain.

Friday, April 24.—Still raining. Made another start, but stopped at Mr. Lee's, about a mile from our last halting place, and got breakfast. We then struck out through rain and mud, our boots soaking wet and our clothes hanging limp. Stopped at Bush Thompson's and bought some apple brandy. Passed through Markham and on to Piedmont (now called Delaplane). We crossed Goose Creek three times: first, on charred logs, the remains of what was once the railroad bridge; second, on a fallen tree, and, third, on a bridge similar to the first. The burnt logs, broken and bent down,

looked as if ready to give way under our weight in crossing. From Piedmont took the road to Upperville, where we arrived early in the evening. Barnes and Ratcliffe went to the house of a friend near town. Philip Lee, Thomas Lee, Wrenn and myself went to Lunchford's, where we got a very poor supper, no fire, and sat until bedtime shivering in our wet boots and clothes.

Saturday, April 25.—On opening my valise to get out dry clothes, I was surprised to find that the water

Headquarters Mosby's Battalion,
Partizan Rangers, *Mo. 2* 1863.

This is to Certify, That *James J. Williamson*,
is a Member of this Command.

J. Mosby
Major Commanding Partizan Rangers.

CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP

As there were men wearing Confederate uniforms (either deserters or absent from their commands without leave), roaming about the country, claiming to belong to Mosby's command, the men were furnished with certificates of this kind.

had leaked in and everything in it was soaked with water. I was compelled to put on wet socks and underclothes.

There was a meeting of Mosby's men in Upperville on this day and they were coming in town singly and in small squads from different directions. I saw Mosby and made myself known to him and my purpose in coming to Virginia. He said he would furnish me a

horse, and told me to come to the next meeting of the command.

I met a number of men who had been prisoners in the Old Capitol with me. I was introduced to William Ayre and rode with him to the home of his brother George S. Ayre, at Ayreshire, who had been a room-mate with me in the Old Capitol Prison. He welcomed me to his home and told me to make his house my headquarters. When I got my horse and equipments I was ready to enter upon my career as a Partisan Ranger.

INMATES OF ROOM NO. 16, DURING MY TERM OF IMPRISONMENT

[The Missourians named were held here awaiting transportation South for exchange.]

Adreon, George S., Baltimore.

Armand, William, Louisiana.

Ayre, George S., Loudoun County, Virginia.

Barnes, John H., Fairfax County, Virginia.

Barrett, Boyd.

Bennett,, Maryland.

Brawner, Redmond F., Prince William County, Virginia.

Carr, John, Fauquier County, Virginia.

Carter, H. Fitzhugh, Fauquier County, Virginia.

Chandler,, Missouri. (From Camp Chase.)

Clift,, Missouri. (From Camp Chase.)

Comastri, Marco, Italy. Arrested coming from the South.

Davis,

Delano, Philemon,

Dula, Lowring, Missouri.

Eorio, Pietro, Brusnengo, Piemonte, Italia.

Ewell, James, Accomac County, Virginia.

Fitzgerald, Edward.

Flaherty, John, Baltimore.

Flaherty, Peter, Baltimore.

Ford, John.
Gardner,
George,
Goldsmith, John M., St. Mary's County, Md.
Green, Missouri. (From Camp Chase.)
Hagan, Missouri. (From Camp Chase.)
Hammett, George.
Hertzog, (From Camp Chase.)
Holbrook, Thomas H., Baltimore.
Hollenbaugh, William T., Pennsylvania.
Hoyle, George, Maryland.
Hunter, John B., Virginia. (Held as a Hostage).
Hurst, Thomas, Baltimore.
Jenkins,
Johnson, James, Clarke County, Virginia.
Keleher, John, Baltimore.
Kerfoot, James F., Clarke County, Virginia.
Key, J., Maryland.
King, Aaron J.
Lackey, Missouri. (From Camp Chase.)
Lewis, Aaron,
Littlepage, William T., Baltimore.
Love, Henry, Dumfries, Virginia.
Love, Llewellyn, Dumfries, Virginia.
Marchland, Judge. (From Camp Chase).
Martin, (From Camp Chase.)
Minor, Fairfax, Virginia.
Mitchell, Captain, Baltimore.
Mitchell, Lieutenant Hugh,
Montgomery,
Mount, Stephen R., Loudoun County, Virginia.
O'Brien, Edward H., Maryland. (First Md. Regiment.)
Pentz, John, Baltimore.
Perry, William McK., Missouri. (From Camp Chase.)
Phillips, Captain Thomas. (Captured running the blockade
into Wilmington, N. C.)
Phillips, Captain Wesley, Baltimore. (Captain of schooner
carrying stores to the Army of the Potomac.)
Purcell, Volney, Loudoun County, Virginia.
Randolph, Virginia.

Reilly,

Richardson, George, Fairfax County, Virginia.

Rinaldi, Raphael, Italy. (Arrested coming from the South)

Russell,, Baltimore.

Short,, Virginia.

Simmons, Albert, Baltimore.

Smith, John C.

Spence, William A., Westmoreland County, Virginia.

Stant, James, Accomac County, Virginia.

Storm, R. B., Baltimore.

Tansell, James, Washington, D. C.

Taylor, George, Accomac County, Virginia.

Taylor, James, Accomac County, Virginia.

Taylor, John W., Accomac County, Virginia.

Taylor, Samuel, Accomac County, Virginia.

Thornton, Frank, Baltimore.

Thornton, William.

Ward, Charles.

Ward, Walter W., Baltimore. (Stuart's Horse Artillery.)

Weiler, Emanuel, Richmond, Virginia.

Williams, Augustus, Vienna, Virginia.

Williams, W. F., Maryland.

Williamson, James J., Washington, D. C.

Wright, J.

TREATMENT OF PRISONERS OF WAR

Hon. Jefferson Davis, in a letter written from Beauvoir, December, 1888, said:

"Nearly a quarter of a century has elapsed since war between the States ceased. Has the prejudice fed on the passions of that period ceased with the physical strife? Shall it descend from sire to son, hardened by its transmission? Or shall it be destroyed by the full development of the truth, the exposure of the guilty, and the vindication of the innocent?"

In the North a general impression was produced, and exists to a certain extent even at this late day, that Northern prisoners incarcerated in Southern prisons during the war, were brutally treated, starved, frozen, neglected and inhumanly treated in sickness, and even murdered, and that this was done in accordance with a wilful and deliberate plan, inaugurated by the Confederate Government and carried out by its officers and soldiers. And no other subject has tended more to keep alive a bitter and hostile feeling between the sections.

It is not so much among soldiers who fought through the war that the intenseness of this feeling is shown as among those whose fighting has been done since the war. In most cases it is the result of prejudice or through ignorance of the real facts.

The Confederate authorities made every effort possible to alleviate the sufferings of prisoners in Southern prisons. Finding it impossible to effect exchange man for man, and aware of their inability to properly care

for the sick and wounded, they offered to deliver to the United States authorities the sick and wounded without insisting on the delivery of any equivalent in return. It was nearly four months after this offer was made by the Confederate authorities before it was accepted by the United States authorities, who had been informed of the frightful mortality among their soldiers in Southern prisons and urged to send speedy transportation to take them away.

Robert Ould, Confederate Agent of Exchange, offered to purchase medicines from the United States authorities, to be used exclusively for the relief of United States prisoners—to pay in gold, cotton or tobacco—two or three prices even—such medicines to be brought into the Confederate lines and dispensed by United States surgeons.

The following letter will show the persistent efforts made by the Confederate authorities for the relief of prisoners in their hands:

Confederate States of America,
War Department, Richmond, Va., Jan. 24, 1864.
Major-General E. A. HITCHCOCK,
Agent of Exchange.

Sir:—In view of the present difficulties attending the exchange and release of prisoners, I propose that all such on each side shall be attended by a proper number of their own surgeons, who, under rules to be established, shall be permitted to take charge of their health and comfort.

I also propose that these surgeons shall act as commissaries, with power to receive and distribute such contributions of money, food, clothing and medicines as may be forwarded for the relief of prisoners. I further propose that these surgeons be selected by their

own governments, and that they shall have full liberty at any and all times, through the agents of exchange, to make reports not only of their own acts, but of any matters relating to the welfare of the prisoners.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,
Ro. OULD, *Agent of Exchange.*

Could anything be fairer and more humane than this proposal?

In a letter to the editor of the *National Intelligencer*, dated August 17, 1868, Robert Ould says:

"The cartel of exchange bears date July 22, 1862. The fourth article provided that all prisoners of war should be discharged on parole in ten days after capture. From the date of the cartel until the summer of 1863, the Confederate authorities had the excess of prisoners. During that interval deliveries were made as fast as the Federal Government furnished transportation. . . . As long as the Confederate Government had the excess of prisoners matters went on smoothly enough; but as soon as the posture of affairs in that respect was changed the cartel could no longer be observed.

"More than once I urged the mortality at Andersonville as a reason for haste on the part of the United States authorities. I know personally it was the purpose of the Confederate Government to send off from its prisons all the sick and wounded, and to continue to do the same from time to time, without requiring any equivalents."

The War Department at Washington, on July 3, 1863, issued General Order No. 209, which states that "it is understood captured officers and men and sick and wounded in hospitals have been paroled and released," and concludes: "Any officer or soldier who gives such parole will be returned to duty without

exchange, and, moreover, will be punished for disobedience to orders."

General J. A. Early, commenting on this order, said: "But for that order all the prisoners captured by us at Gettysburg, amounting to fully six thousand, would have been paroled, and, in fact, the proper staff officers were proceeding to parole them, and had actually paroled and released a large number of them, when news came of the order referred to. Why did Mr. Stanton object to the paroling of those prisoners? And why did he prefer that they should be confined in prisons in the South—'prison pens,' as Northern Republicans are pleased to call them. . . . If any of the prisoners brought from Gettysburg, or subsequently captured, lost their lives at Andersonville, or any other Southern prison, is it not palpable that the responsibility for their deaths rested on Edwin M. Stanton?"

The fact is, the authorities at Washington were willing to allow their soldiers to languish and die in Southern prisons rather than consent to exchange. Would rather have them kept and starved that they might make capital out of it. When they consented to receive the sick and wounded, they did it—not for the purpose of ameliorating their sufferings, but that they might take the worst looking of the sick and starved prisoners and make an exhibition of their pictures to arouse a feeling of resentment among the Northern people, cover up their own infamy and place the South in a false light before the powers of the world.

In August, 1864, Brigadier-Generals Wessells and Seymour were sent South to look into the condition and treatment of Union prisoners. From a report of

General Seymour to Colonel Hoffman, Commissary-General of Prisoners, Washington, D. C., I take the following extract, which proves how little the United States authorities were concerned on account of the sufferings of their soldiers who were held as prisoners of war:

“The Southern authorities are exceedingly desirous of an exchange of prisoners. General Wessells and myself had an interview with General Ripley at Charleston, S. C., on this point. Their urgency is unbounded, but we asserted that it was the poorest possible policy for our Government to deliver to them 40,000 prisoners, better fed and clothed than ever before in their lives, in good condition for the field, while the United States receives in return an equal number of men worn out with privations and neglect, barely able to walk, often drawing their last breath, and utterly unfit to take the field as soldiers.”

Major-General Ben Butler, referring to the frustration of his efforts, while in command at Fortress Monroe, to bring about an exchange of prisoners, says in his book:

“His (Grant’s) proposition was to make an aggressive fight upon Lee, trusting to the superiority of numbers and to the practical impossibility of Lee getting any considerable reinforcements to keep up his army. We had 26,000 Confederate prisoners, and if they were exchanged it would give the Confederates a corps larger than any in Lee’s army, of disciplined veterans, better able to stand the hardships of a campaign and more capable than any other,” etc.

At the last session of the Confederate Congress a joint committee of the two Houses was appointed to take up and investigate the “Condition and Treatment

of Prisoners of War." This committee took a vast amount of testimony—sworn depositions of witnesses—surgeons, officers and soldiers, private citizens and Federal prisoners.

The object of this was to correct the unjust statements and misrepresentations which were circulated, and to remove false impressions and unfounded prejudices—to present to the world "a vindication of their country and relieve her authorities from the injurious slanders brought against her by her enemies."

From the extremely lengthy Report of this committee I give here a few extracts:

"This Report is rendered especially important by reason of persistent efforts lately made by the Government of the United States and by associations and individuals connected or co-operating with it, to asperse the honor of the Confederate authorities and to charge them with deliberate and wilful cruelty to prisoners of war. Two publications have been issued at the North within the past year and have been circulated not only in the United States but in some parts of the South and in Europe. One of these is the Report of the joint select committee of the Northern Congress on the Conduct of the War, known as 'Report No. 67.' It is accompanied by eight pictures or photographs alleged to represent United States prisoners of war returned from Richmond in a sad state of emaciation and suffering.

"The intent and spirit of this report may be gathered from the following extract: 'The evidence proves beyond all manner of doubt, a determination on the part of the rebel authorities, deliberately and persistently practised for a long time past, to subject those of our soldiers who have been so unfortunate as to fall into their hands to a system of treatment which has resulted in reducing many of those who have survived and been permitted to return to us to a condition both

physically and mentally which no language we can use can adequately describe.'—Rep. p. 1.

"The other (Report) purports to be a 'Narrative of the Privations and Sufferings of United States Officers and Soldiers while Prisoners of War,' and is issued as a Report of a Commission of Inquiry appointed by the United States Sanitary Commission.

"The disingenuous attempt is made in both these publications to produce the impression that these sick and emaciated men were fair representatives of the general state of the prisoners held by the South, and that all their prisoners were being rapidly reduced to the same state by starvation and cruelty, and by neglect, ill-treatment and denial of proper food, stimulants and medicines in the Confederate hospitals. The facts are simply these:

"The Federal authorities, in violation of the cartel, having for a long time refused exchange of prisoners, finally consented to a partial exchange of the sick and wounded on both sides. Accordingly a number of such prisoners were sent from the hospitals in Richmond. General directions had been given that none should be sent, except those who might be expected to endure the removal and passage with safety to their lives; but in some cases the surgeons were induced to depart from this rule by the entreaties of some officers and men in the last stages of emaciation, suffering not only with excessive debility, but with 'nostalgia,' or home-sickness, whose cases were regarded as desperate, who could not live if they remained, and might possibly improve if carried home. Thus it happened that some very sick and emaciated men were carried to Annapolis, but their illness was not the result of ill-treatment or neglect. Such cases might be found in any large hospital North or South. They might even be found in private families, where the sufferer would be surrounded by every comfort that love could bestow. Yet these are the cases which, with hideous violation of decency, the Northern Committee have

paraded in pictures and photographs. They have taken their own sick and enfeebled soldiers, have stripped them naked; have exposed them before a daguerrean apparatus, have pictured every shrunken limb and muscle, and all for the purpose, not of relieving their sufferings, but of bringing a false and slanderous charge against the South.

"A candid reader of these publications will not fail to discover that, whether the statements they make be true or not, their spirit is not adapted to promote a better feeling between the hostile powers. They are not intended for the humane purpose of ameliorating the condition of the unhappy prisoners held in captivity. They are designed to inflame the evil passions of the North; to keep up the war spirit among their own people; to represent the South as acting under the dominion of a spirit of cruelty, inhumanity and interested malice, and thus to vilify her people in the eyes of all on whom these publications can work.

"But even now enough is known to vindicate the South, and to furnish an overwhelming answer to all complaints on the part of the United States Government or people, that their prisoners were stinted in food or supplies. Their own savage warfare has wrought the evil. They have blockaded our ports; have excluded from us food, clothing and medicines; have even declared medicines contraband of war, and have repeatedly destroyed the contents of drug stores, and the supplies of private physicians in the country; have ravaged our country, burned our houses and destroyed growing crops and farming implements. One of their officers—(General Sheridan)—has boasted in his official report that in the Shenandoah Valley alone he burned 2,000 barns filled with wheat and corn; that he burned all the mills in the whole tract of country, destroyed all the factories of cloth, and killed or drove off every animal, even to the poultry, that could contribute to human sustenance. These desolations have been repeated again and again in different parts of the South. Thousands of our families have been driven

from their homes, as helpless and destitute refugees. Our enemies have destroyed our railroads and other means of transportation, by which food could be supplied from abundant districts to those without it. While thus desolating our country in violation of the usages of civilized warfare, they have refused to exchange prisoners; have forced us to keep 50,000 of their men in captivity, and yet have attempted to attribute to us the sufferings and privations caused by their own acts."

The report also contains a great amount of testimony concerning the cruel treatment of Confederate prisoners in Northern prisons.

Pollard, in his history of the "Lost Cause," after reciting the extraordinary efforts made by the Confederate authorities to relieve the sufferings at Andersonville, says:

"Who was responsible for the sufferings of the sick and wounded prisoners at Andersonville, from August to December, 1864? The world will ask with amazement if it was possible that thousands of prisoners were left to die in inadequate places of confinement, merely to make a case against the South—merely for romance! The simple fact gives the clue to the whole story of the deception and inhuman cruelty of the authorities at Washington with reference to their prisoners of war—the key to a chapter of horrors that even the hardy hand of history shakes to unlock. To blacken the reputation of an honorable enemy; to make a false appeal to the sensibilities of the world; to gratify an inhuman revenge, Mr. Stanton, the saturnine and malignant Secretary of War at Washington, did not hesitate to doom to death thousands of his countrymen, and then to smear their sentinels with accusing blood."

ABOUT DEAD-LINES

Much has been written and spoken of the "dead-lines" in Southern prisons. One would suppose they were unknown in Northern prisons. The fact is, they were as common at the North as in the South. There was not a Northern prison-camp but had its "dead-line," and at all these prisons men were shot at and many killed *for passing over them*. And there was no reason to complain of this, for the lines were plainly marked, and it was known that anyone attempting to cross them would be shot. So, any man—no matter whether North or South—killed in violating this regulation did not deserve any sympathy.

Even in the Old Capitol Prison guards with loaded guns were stationed around the prison, within and without, and any prisoner attempting to escape, or overstepping the bounds, was liable to be shot. Two men, at least, were killed there—Wharton and Stewart, as described in my Prison Diary, page 36. And this in the city of Washington, a fortified city, within the Union lines, surrounded by camps, with thousands of soldiers, and the prisoners confined in a walled prison-house heavily guarded.

MAJOR HENRY WIRZ, C. S. A.

The True History of the Wirz Case.

I was living in Washington at the time Captain Wirz underwent the travesty of a trial—a farce which ended in a tragedy.

I frequently met and conversed with Louis Schade, his counsel, and his associate, Judge Hughes. I also met and conversed with witnesses on the trial.

Rev. Father Boyle and Father Wiget, who attended Wirz during his imprisonment and ministered to him in his last moments on the scaffold, were both warm personal friends of mine—Father Wiget particularly. I not only regarded him as a spiritual father, as he was, but with all the respect and affection which a devoted son would have for a kind, loving father. Had I any doubts in the matter of the guilt or innocence of Wirz, I would take the word of either of these good and true men before that of the whole tribe of hired perjurors who testified against him.

There are many persons at the present day who know nothing as to the truth or falsity of the record of events which took place during and immediately after the Civil War, except what they have heard or perhaps read in histories written in the heat of passion, with prejudice and malice, and their minds are often poisoned and their judgments warped by the misrepresentations and sensational stories invented at the time to exasperate the people of the North.

Major Henry Wirz was a native of Switzerland.

He came to this country, and in 1861 was a physician practising his profession in Western Louisiana.

He entered the Confederate Army at the beginning of the war, was wounded—his right arm shattered by a ball, so that he remained a cripple permanently. As his right arm was powerless he did not have the physical ability to ill-treat prisoners as some



MAJOR HENRY WIRZ, C. S. A.

of the witnesses testified at his trial. Even if this charge had been true, that he exercised undue severity toward some of the prisoners, he might have been justified in so doing, when their fellow prisoners were compelled to hang a half a dozen in self-defense.

In 1862 he was promoted to the rank of Captain "for bravery on the field of battle," and to that of Major a few months before the close of the war.

He was an impulsive man—some said he was rough in his manner. This apparent roughness in persons of foreign birth sometimes proceeds from difference in language and their mode of expression, which may only need a little prejudice or ill-will to distort into something offensive. But that he was a man kind at heart is shown by his earnest endeavors to relieve the sufferings of the prisoners under his charge.

In the Official Records of the Rebellion, published by the United States Government, will be found letters of Wirz to Captain R. D. Chapman, Acting Adjutant of Post, and Colonel D. S. Chandler, Assistant Adjutant and Inspector-General, showing his efforts to better the condition of the prisoners, both with regard to rations and hygiene.

In the Southern Historical Society Papers is a letter from General John D. Imboden, written in 1876, from which the following extracts are taken:

"I have already alluded to Captain Wirz's recommendation to put up more shelter. I ordered it, and thereafter, daily, a hundred or more prisoners were paroled and set to work in the neighboring forest. In the course of a fortnight comfortable log-houses, with floors and good chimneys—for which the prisoners made and burnt the brick—were erected for twelve or fifteen hundred men.

"This same man (Captain Wirz) who was tried and hung as a murderer, warmly urged the establishment of a tannery and shoemaker's shop, informing me that there were many men among the prisoners skilled in these trades, and that some of them knew a process of very rapidly converting hides into tolerably good leather. There were thousands of hides at Andersonville from the young cattle butchered during the previous summer and fall, whilst the country

yet contained such animals. A few weeks later many of the barefooted prisoners were supplied with rough, but comfortable shoes. Another suggestion came from the medical staff of the post, that I ordered to be at once put into practice: It was to brew corn beer for those suffering from scorbutic taint. Captain Wirz entered warmly into this enterprise. I mention these facts to show that he was not the monster he was afterward represented to be, when his blood was called for by infuriated fanaticism. I would have proved these facts *if I had been permitted to testify on his trial, after I was summoned before the Court by the United States*, and have substantiated them by the records of the prison and of my own headquarters."

When the Federal troops were sent to Georgia Major Wirz was placed under guard and taken to the Old Capitol Prison, in Washington, D. C., where he remained from the 10th of May, 1865, until November 10th, 1865, when he was hung.

For three weary months he was kept a close prisoner, and then he was taken before a Military Commission for trial (?).

In the case of Major Wirz the usual course of procedure was reversed—he was first condemned, then tried, and finally executed. Yet this was not the final act, for the malignity of his persecutors followed him even after death. When Father Boyle and others sought to give the body of Wirz Christian burial in consecrated ground the request was denied and the body deposited beside those executed for the assassination of President Lincoln, in the yard of the old arsenal.

The regard for law and justice which usually governs in a Civil Court had no holding in the proceedings of a Military Commission, where the decisions

of the Court were rendered in accordance with the opinions of the Judge Advocate, who admitted or rejected testimony as he thought it affected the case. Consequently persons whose testimony was considered vital for the defense, were not allowed to testify, while witnesses for the prosecution were permitted to give their evidence, no matter how inconsistent or manifestly false it was.

In a letter dated August 17th, 1868, to the *National Intelligencer*, Robert Ould, who was Confederate States Agent of Exchange, says:

"I was named by poor Wirz as a witness in his behalf. The summons was issued by Chipman, the Judge Advocate of the Military Court. I obeyed the summons and was in attendance upon the court for some ten days. . . . Early in the morning of the day on which I expected to give my testimony I received a note from Chipman requiring me to surrender my subpoena. I refused, as it was my protection in Washington. . . . I engaged, however, to appear before the court and did so the same morning. The Judge Advocate endorsed on my subpoena these words: 'The within subpoena is hereby revoked; the person named is discharged from further attendance.' I have got the curious document before me now, signed with the name of 'N. P. Chipman, Colonel,' etc. I intend to keep it, if I can, as the evidence of the first case in any court of any sort, where a witness who was summoned for the defense was dismissed by the prosecution."

Rev. Father Whelan, of Savannah, Ga., a venerable Catholic priest, who had been in the habit of visiting and ministering to the prisoners at Andersonville, went to Washington, as a witness. He was asked by the prosecuting attorney what he knew, and after telling

his observations at the prison, he was told he was not wanted and could go home.

In an old diary of mine, I find this entry:

"A man named Marini was in the store to-day. He was called as a witness in the Wirz case. He had been a prisoner at Andersonville. He said many of the witnesses had sworn falsely. Some swore he had been bitten by bloodhounds. This he said was false; that he had shown them his person to prove there were no marks of wounds. 'If I had been torn by the dogs as they swore I had,' said he, 'would there not have been at least some scars to show it?' He said that at the time some of the witnesses swore Wirz had shot prisoners, Wirz was not at Andersonville, but was absent from the post for about four weeks on surgeon's certificate, suffering from gangrene; that the accounts of the prisoners being killed by Wirz were false. Marini was in the employ of the United States Government as a spy during the war. He said that one of the witnesses swore he had been sick during the whole time he was at Andersonville. 'So he should have been,' said Marini; 'he didn't wash himself the whole time he was there; he was too lazy.'"

The star witness for the prosecution was the Marquis De la Baume, who claimed to be a grand nephew of Lafayette. He testified to the "individual killing" or murder "committed by Wirz." Before the conclusion of the trial he was, *on the recommendation of the members of the Military Commission*, appointed to a clerkship in the Interior Department at Washington. He was afterward recognized as a deserter from the Seventh New York Regiment, and his name was plain Felix Oeser. When this fact became known he was dismissed from his office, a few weeks after the execution of Wirz. There was no further need of his services.

Another witness against Wirz was John Rainbow. In September, 1894, he was sentenced in Union County (N. J.) Court to one year in State Prison for stealing a watch. A petition, signed by Grand Army men, was presented to the court and this sentence was revoked and he was committed to the county jail for six months.

In the charges upon which Wirz was condemned and hung were thirteen specifications of men said to have been murdered by him, but though all the most minute details were given, it is a singular fact that there is not given the *name* of any one of these persons—in every instance mentioned, it is “name unknown.”

In the first specification Wirz was charged with conspiring with Jefferson Davis, James A. Seddon, Howell Cobb, and others, named and unnamed, “to injure and impair the health and destroy the lives,” etc., “of soldiers in the service of the United States.” On this charge Wirz was declared guilty and hanged. Why were none of the other conspirators punished? Did he conspire alone?

Had the case been brought in any Civil Court—no matter where—it would have been thrown out of court.

What must have been the agony of this poor victim, sitting in the courtroom, day after day, and week after week, listening to the recital of the horrible tales, describing him as a fiend incarnate, by wretches who were swearing his life away. He looked in vain upon the faces around for a glance of pity, but on all sides he met the glaring eyes of men thirsting for his blood.

Foiled in their efforts to incriminate Jefferson Davis, his cruel and vindictive persecutors determined to wreck their vengeance upon Wirz, poor and friendless, whom they had in their power, and who had rejected their proposal to purchase his life by swearing falsely against Jefferson Davis.

Major Richard B. Winder, M.D., and dean of the Baltimore Dental College, was a prisoner in the Old Capitol, Washington, at the time of Wirz's imprisonment and execution. A statement of his in regard to an occurrence which took place the evening before Wirz was executed has been extensively published, but an extract from it will not be out of place here:

"A night or two before Wirz's execution—early in the evening, I saw several male individuals (looking like gentlemen) pass into Wirz's cell. I was naturally on the *qui vive* to know the meaning of this unusual visitation, and was hoping and expecting too that it might be a reprieve—for even at that time I was not prepared to believe that so foul a judicial murder would be perpetrated. I think—indeed, I am quite certain—there were three of them. Wirz came to his door, which was immediately opposite mine, and I gave him a look of inquiry, which was at once understood. He said: 'These men have just offered me my liberty if I will testify against Mr. Davis, and criminate him with the charges against the Andersonville Prison. I told them that I could not do this, as I neither knew Mr. Davis personally, officially or socially, but if they expected with the offer of my miserable life to purchase me to treason and treachery to the South they had undervalued me.'"

In reply to a letter of inquiry from Hon. Jefferson Davis, Rev. Father Boyle wrote:

"On the evening before the day of the execution

of Major Wirz a man visited me, on the part of a cabinet officer, to inform me that Major Wirz would be pardoned if he would implicate Jefferson Davis in the cruelties at Andersonville. No names were given by this emissary, and, upon my refusing to take any action in the matter, he went to Mr. Louis Schade,



REV. F. E. BOYLE

Pastor of St. Peter's R. C. Church, Washington, D. C.

counsel for Major Wirz, with the same purpose and with a like result.

"When I visited Major Wirz the next morning he told me that the same proposal had been made to him and had been rejected with scorn. The Major was very indignant, and said that while he was innocent of the charges for which he was about to suffer death, he would not purchase his liberty by perjury and a crime such as was made the condition of his freedom.

"I attended the major to the scaffold, and he died in the peace of God and praying for his enemies. I

know that he was indeed innocent of all the cruel charges on which his life was sworn away, and I was edified by the Christian spirit in which he submitted to his persecutors.

"Yours very truly,
"F. E. BOYLE."

Wirz spent the greater part of the night before his execution in writing, but slept for a few hours before daylight and awoke cheerful and refreshed. He was calm and self-possessed and had left nothing undone. His own books, as well as those borrowed, were all neatly done up and left for delivery to the proper parties. His diary was completed up to the last day.

He felt keenly the abuse that was heaped upon him. As he bade farewell to his old associate, Captain R. H. Winder, he said:

"Promise me, if you live, to do all in your power to wipe out this awful stain upon my character. Make my name and character stand as bright before the world as it did when you first knew me. Promise me you will do something to assist my wife."

Winder turned his face away to hide his tears, as he replied: "Captain, I will."

One of the daily newspapers, after relating this parting with Winder, said:

"Wirz passed on down the stairs, out between the files of men facing outward, up to the scaffold, showing something in his face and step which in a better man might have passed for heroism."

How contemptible! His courage and fortitude shone out in spite of the infamous position in which his enemies sought to place him, but even the eyes blinded by prejudice and the callous hearts around

him could not fail to note, though they could not appreciate, the lofty spirit of the man.

From the little room in the third story, designated "No. 9—Wirz, H., Captain C. S. A." he was marched to the scaffold, erected in one corner of the prison yard. Here he took a seat on a small stool, immediately under the gaping noose swaying over him. A soldier stood at shoulder arms on either corner of the platform, and four companies, one each from the 195th and 214th Pennsylvania, and two from the 9th Regiment of Hancock's Corps, formed a hollow square around the scaffold. Fathers Boyle and Wiget never left his side until the last moment. Indeed, when the noose was adjusted his face wore a smile and he was still talking to Father Boyle.

For eighteen minutes he was compelled to sit and listen to the reading of the findings and sentence—the enumeration of the crimes with which he was charged, while on the housetops and in the branches of the trees in the Capitol grounds men and boys crowded, all eager to witness the ghastly spectacle; and their inhuman shouts, and brutal jests about the "dead-line," pendant above him, could be heard by Wirz, who sat apparently calm and unmoved, save when amid the groans and outcries, a voice called out "Hang the scoundrel." As this reached his ears he turned quickly, with a defiant look in the direction from which the sound proceeded, then, giving a cool glance on the surroundings, he resumed his self-command, giving his undivided attention to his spiritual advisers.

At the close of the reading Major Russell asked Wirz if he wished to say anything to the public before the execution. He replied: "I have nothing to say,

only that I am innocent, and will die like a man, my hopes being in the future. I go before my God, the Almighty God, and he will judge between me and you." At twenty minutes to eleven o'clock Sylvester Ballon kicked away the prop and Henry Wirz passed from life to the dark valley of the shadow of death.



St. Aloysius R. C. Church, Washington, D. C.

I saw Father Wiget a few hours after the execution. He, with Father Boyle, had stood with Wirz on the scaffold—had clasped his hand just as he was about to be launched into eternity. He had been with him through the mockery of a trial, and when I saw him his breast was filled with emotion. He said: "Oh! he was a brave man!" He had stood by him as the

rabble thirsting for his blood, like the cruel Jews, cried out "Crucify him! Crucify him!" and he knew the man was innocent of the crimes imputed to him. "He was a brave man"—the good old priest could say no more; his heart was touched, and his feelings too deep for mere words. Between what is felt and what is expressed there is often an immeasurable distance. It is impossible at times to give expression in words to the most touching—to the most beautiful emotions of the heart.

In Wirz's letters to his wife there is an amount of pathos—a bitter, yet mournful wailing. The soft notes which he touches with trembling fingers will strike a sympathetic chord in hearts not utterly lost to all sense of tenderness or humanity.

A letter written by his wife just after she had learned of the termination of her husband's trial would in itself show how false and malicious were the assertions of sensational newspapers that there was no kindly feeling between them. After speaking of her distress at the necessity of leaving him at that critical moment, and telling him not to despair—that all would come out right—she speaks of their past happiness, and cannot believe the authorities will tear them apart; that if the members of the court only knew how much they suffered, a pardon would be granted him. The letter concludes as follows:

"Dear husband, bear up bravely, whatever your fate may be. If I could but see you for one short hour I should be much comforted. I cannot describe to you on paper the distress of my mind. May angels watch and protect you from all harm, is the constant prayer of your loving wife."

In Wirz's last letter to his wife and children are the sad, soft breathings from a bosom filled with the warmest affection and anxious solicitude for their welfare:

"Old Capitol Prison,
"Washington, D. C., Nov. 10, 1865.

"My dearest Wife and Children: When these lines reach you the hand who wrote them will be stiff and cold. In a few hours from now I shall be dead. Oh, if I could express myself as I wish, if I could tell you what I have suffered when I thought about you and the children! I must leave you without the means to live, to the miseries of a cold cruel world. Lise, do not grieve, do not despair; we will meet again in a better world. Console yourself, think as I do—that I die innocent. Who knows better than you that all these tales of cruelties and murders are infamous lies, and why should I not say it? A great many do call me hard-hearted, because I tell them that I am not guilty, that I have nothing to confess. Oh, think for a moment how the thought that I must suffer and die innocent must sustain me in the last terrible hour; that when I shall stand before my Maker I can say, 'Lord, of these things you know I am not guilty. I have sinned often and rebelled against Thee, oh, let my unmerited death be an atonement.' Lise, I die reconciled. I die, I hope, as a Christian. This is His holy will that I should die, and therefore let us say with Christ, 'Thy will, O Lord, be done.'

"I hardly know what to say. Oh, let me beg you, do not give way to despair. Think that I am gone to my Father, to your Father, to the Father of all, and that there I hope to meet you. Live for the dear children. Oh, do take good care of Cora. Kiss her for me. Kiss Susan and Cornelia, and tell them to live so that we may meet again in the heaven above the skies; tell them that my last thoughts, my last prayer shall be for them."

Then follow some words of advice with regard to the schooling of the children, and to the future life, etc., of the family, and he concludes by saying:

"God bless you all and protect you. God give you what you stand in need of, and grant that you all so live that when you die you can say, Lord, Thou callest me, here I am. And now, farewell wife, children, all, I will and must close, farewell, farewell; God be with us.

"Your unfortunate husband and father,

"H. WIRZ."

EXTRACTS FROM DIARY OF MAJOR WIRZ

From the diary kept by Wirz while in prison during the progress of the trial, I make a few extracts, yet enough to show the manhood, the nobility of the man:

"Old Capitol Prison, Oct. 1, 1865.

"Everything is quiet around me. No sound but the measured steps of the sentinel in the corridor can be heard. The man who is sitting in my room is nodding in his chair. Poor, short-sighted mortals that we all are! This man is here to watch me, to prevent any attempt I might make to take my own life. My life —what is it worth to anyone except myself and my poor family, that they should be so anxious? I think I understand it very well, they are afraid I might cheat them and the public at large from having their revenge, and giving, at the same time, the masses the benefit of seeing a man hanged. If this is all, they are welcome. I have no desire to live; perhaps there never was a more willing victim dragged to the scaffold than I am. Why should I desire to live? A beggar, crippled, and with my health and spirit broken—why, oh why, should I desire to live? For the sake of my family? My family will do as well without me as with me. Instead of providing for and taking care of them, I would be a burden to them. And still, knowing all that, why do I not put an end to my life? Because, in the first instance, what I suffer now is the Will of God. GOD—how much is not in this word—what a tower of strength, of consolation! Yes, Heavenly Father, if it was not Thy will I would not be a prisoner. I would not be looked at, spoken of as a monster, such as the world has never seen and never will see. If that what I suffer now was not put on me by you for some wise purpose I would be as free as

the bird in the air. Thou and I—we two alone know that I am innocent of those terrible charges. Thou and I—we both know that I never took the life of a fellow man—that I never caused a man to suffer and die in consequence of ill-treatment inflicted by me; and still I am tried for murder. Men have sworn that they saw me do it; they have called on Thee to witness that they would tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and still they told a lie—a lie as black as hell itself. Why did you not send a thunderbolt from the high heavens—why, oh God, why? Because it is Thy holy will, and in humility I kiss the rod with which Thou seest proper to chastise me.

"The second reason why I did not destroy a life which is a burden to me, is because I owed it to myself, my family, my relatives, even to the world at large, to prove that there never existed a man so utterly devoid of all humanity, such a fiend incarnate, as it has been attempted to prove me to be. I see very well that I have no earthly show—that I am a doomed man; but thanks be to God that I am enabled to say with holy Stephanus: Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. They judge from what they hear and I must abide by it.

*"Oct. 2, 1865.—*Another day has passed. I am tired and worn out; whichever way I turn my eyes everything looks gloomy and dark. Can it be possible that, knowing what I do know, I shall fall a victim. But why do I doubt? What right have I to grumble, as if it were a thing unheard of in history that men suffered the death of a felon as innocent of the crime alleged as I am; and if I dare to make a comparison between our Saviour and myself, did not He also suffer death? True, he died as an atonement for a sinful world; true, He died willingly; He had a holy mission to fulfill; but I? Why should I die? I can only say, because it is God's will. Oh, God! Our Heavenly Father, give me grace, give me the power to bear the cross which Thou seest fit to lay on me. Have I not often

the bird in the air. Thou and I—we two alone know that I am innocent of those terrible charges. Thou and I—we both know that I never took the life of a fellow man—that I never caused a man to suffer and die in consequence of ill-treatment inflicted by me; and still I am tried for murder. Men have sworn that they saw me do it; they have called on Thee to witness that they would tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and still they told a lie—a lie as black as hell itself. Why did you not send a thunderbolt from the high heavens—why, oh God, why? Because it is Thy holy will, and in humility I kiss the rod with which Thou seest proper to chastise me.

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sinned against Thee, and neglected the holy commandments? If I suffer now innocently can I, date I say, I never offended Thee? Therefore be calm, my poor heart. Give thyself into His hands and say, Abba! Father!

*"Oct. 3. 1865.—*What a mockery is this trial. I feel at times as if I ought to speak out aloud and tell them, why do you wrong yourself and me too? Why not end the game at once? Take me and hang me and be done with it. A few days I asked to arrange my defense; it was refused on the ground that I had ample time. Ample time, indeed! May the day be far distant for General Wallace when he may plead with grim death for a day, and receive the answer, No! I just received a note from my wife, saying she had tried in every way to see me, but impossible. She says she is going to her mother in Kentucky, and hopes to be able to do more for me there than in remaining here. Poor, deluded woman, what do you expect to accomplish, what can you do for me but pray? Oh, what a consolation it is to a person in a situation like mine, that there is in the wide, wide world at least one being that will pray for me. Yes, pray; but pray for thyself; the road thou hast to travel is a hard one; when thou findest out that when you pressed my hand two weeks ago, when thy lips touched mine, it was in all probability the last time *then* dost thou need all the comfort prayer can give. May God bless you, and take care of you and the dear, dear children—I must end. Everything swims before my eyes—God, oh, God, have mercy upon me.

*"Oct. 4. 1865.—*What a mockery this trial is. They say that they are anxious that I should have justice done to me, and then when a witness is put on the stand to give testimony they try everything to break him down; if they cannot do it, they try to assail his private character. When they had their own witnesses

up, they not alone were allowed to state everything I said, everything I done, but even what they heard others say that I had said so and so, done such and such things, and now, when I wish to prove by my witnesses what I also said and done, it is said it is inadmissible. I might just as well be put on the stand myself, as if I had said those things now and not a year ago, when I had no idea that I should be held to account hereafter. But so the world goes, and all I can say is, Oh, God, give me strength to bear with patience and humility what Thou seest fit to put on me. Be Thou my judge.

"Oct. 5, 1865.—When I left the courtroom to-day, I heard a lady remark: 'I wish I could shoot out his eyes,' meaning me. Foolish woman! The time will come when my earthly eyes are shut up; are you in such a hurry? But it is very natural that people do think and pass such remarks. For weeks and weeks they have heard men testify to cruelties done by me and now a very slim chance have I to contradict these statements. It seems to me as if General Wallace had a personal spite against me or my counsel, or he would not act the way he does. If he has one against me, I pity him that he has not more magnanimity of soul than to crush me in such an unheard of arbitrary way; if he has a spite against my counsel, it is a cowardly act to do as he does, for in the end I am the sufferer, and not my counsel.

"Oct. 6, 1865.—Another day passed. I wish the trial was over. I wonder what unheard-of resolutions the court will pass again to-morrow. I did not feel it so keenly to-day as I felt it other days, and I have to thank God for it in permitting me to partake of the Holy Communion this morning. I feel less contempt for those who are sitting in judgment over me. If it is God's will to open their eyes and hearts, He alone has the power to do it. I am certain that none of the

court, nor the Judge Advocate, considers and believes me guilty. They all know that the whole thing is a farce. Cruelties have been committed at Andersonville; some one has to suffer for it; they have me; therefore, I am the one, *voila tout.*"

MONUMENT AT ANDERSONVILLE

After more than forty years had passed an act of tardy justice was performed, when a monument was unveiled at Andersonville, in memory of the man who was the victim of cruel injustice and put to death for crimes of which he was innocent.

The monument is a shaft of gray and white, 35 feet in height and simple in design. The base is formed by four square slabs of stone superimposed in the form of a pyramid. Above this are two heavy blocks of stone, on the four sides of which are carved the following inscriptions:

NORTH SIDE

"When time shall have softened passion and prejudice, when reason shall have stripped the mask from misrepresentation, then Justice, holding evenly her scales, will require much of past censure and praise to change places.

"JEFFERSON DAVIS.

"December, 1888."

SOUTH SIDE

"Discharging his duty with such humanity as the harsh circumstances of the times and the policy of the foe permitted, Captain Wirz became at last the victim of a misdirected popular clamor. He was arrested in time of peace while under the protection of a parole, tried by a military commission of a service to which he did not belong and condemned to ignominious death on charges of excessive cruelty to Federal prisoners. He indignantly spurned a pardon proffered on condi-

tion that he would incriminate President Davis and thus exonerate himself from charges of which both were innocent."

EAST SIDE

"In memory of Captain Henry Wirz, C. S. A. Born in Zurich, Switzerland, 1822. Sentenced to death and executed at Washington, D. C., November 10, 1865. To rescue his name from the stigma attached to it by embittered prejudice this shaft is erected by the Georgia Division United Daughters of the Confederacy."

WEST SIDE

"It is hard on our men held in Southern prisons not to exchange them, but it is humanity to those left in the ranks to fight our battles. At this particular time to release all Rebel prisoners North would insure Sherman's defeat and would compromise our safety here.

"ULYSSES S. GRANT.

"August 18, 1864."

FAIRFAX COURT HOUSE RAID AND CAPTURE OF GENERAL STOUGHTON

As detailed accounts of this famous raid have been so often published I will not repeat the story here. A little incident connected with it, however, may be new to some of my readers:

In October, 1906, there was a reunion of the old-time Telegraphers' and Historical Association held in Washington, D. C. From a special dispatch to the *Baltimore Sun* of October 11th, I take the following:

"Another interesting war-time telegrapher attending the Convention is R. F. Weitbrec, now a wealthy contractor of Denver. In March, 1863, he was operator for General Stoughton, whose headquarters were at Fairfax Court House, with several thousand men.

"Hooker had more than 100,000 men between us and Lee's army," he said to-day, "and we felt as safe as if we were in Boston. My office and living quarters were in a tent in the yard of the General's headquarters. About three o'clock one rainy night I was rudely awakened by someone playing "ride a cock horse" on my stomach. There had been several gay young lieutenants around my camp who made a practice of coming to my tent at unseemly hours and having fun with me.

"In the darkness I mistook the person on my stomach for one of these, and tried to throw him off. Instantly my throat was clutched and I felt a cold muzzle against my temple.* That moment a light flared

*The "Mosby Man" here mentioned, was Joseph Nelson, afterward Lieutenant of Company A, 43d Battalion Virginia Cavalry, Mosby's Rangers.

up and my intruders were two Confederate cavalrymen, who told me they were Mosby's men, who had gobbled up a General with a lot of horses and prisoners. One of them whittled my telegraph instrument into junk. I was taken out, mounted on a horse and taken on one of the wildest rides ever experienced by



THE GUNNELL HOUSE, FAIRFAX COURT HOUSE
General Stoughton's Headquarters

a human being. There were only a dozen or two of the cavalrymen. They had nearly 100 horses and prisoners. Besides, they were surrounded by thousands of our soldiers and didn't stop for sentries, except to grab and take them along. By daybreak they had us outside the Federal lines, and breakfast didn't come for anybody in the party until late that evening. I spent several months in prison, and when exchanged

went West, where Indian hunting proved tamer than pastoral life in Virginia during the war."

In "Historic Records of the Fifth New York Cavalry," by Rev. Louis N. Boudrye, Chaplain of the Regiment, I find the following:

"March 9th.—About 3 o'clock A.M. Mosby and his gang, led by Sergeant James F. Ames, formerly of Company L, of this regiment, having safely passed the pickets, entered Fairfax Court House. Without scarcely firing a shot they captured 50 fine horses and about 30 prisoners, including Brigadier-General Stoughton and Captain Barker of the Fifth New York Cavalry. The brigade was sent in pursuit of the dashing party, each regiment taking different routes, but they returned at night unsuccessful, the Fifth New York having gone to Herndon Station. Such a raid, five or six miles within our lines, resulting in such a heavy loss to us, reflects very uncreditably upon some of our military leaders, while it shows how wily a foe we have to contend with."

When Company F, Mosby's Battalion, was organized, James F. Ames, usually spoken of as "Big Yankee," was chosen as second lieutenant. He was killed October 9th, 1864, at Mrs. Shacklett's gate on the road to Piedmont (now called Delaplane) by a Federal scout who came out with one of the parties from Rectortown that morning, and while this scout was rifling the corpse, he was killed by one of Mosby's men, Lud. Lake.

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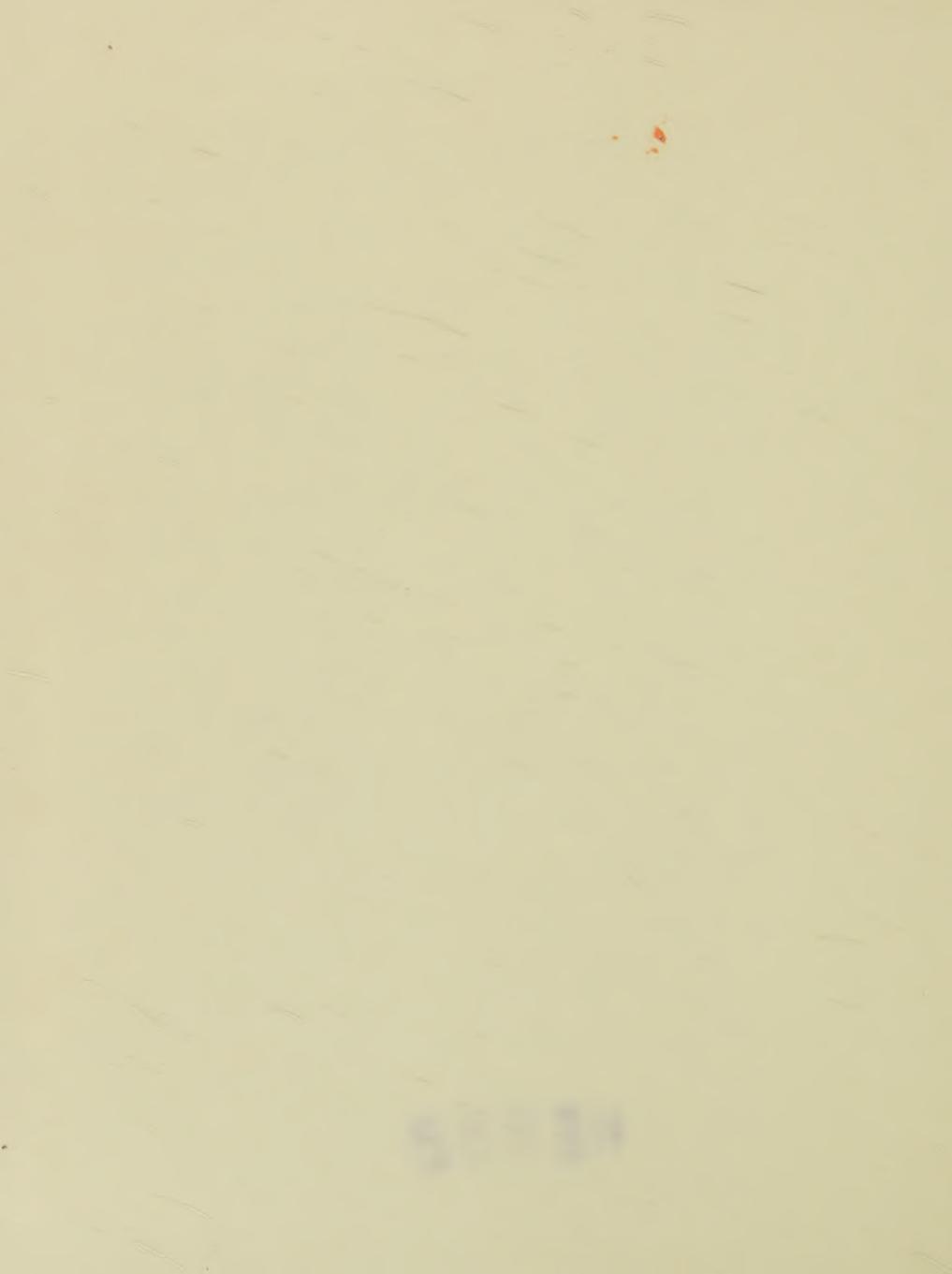
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